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## MUSIC AS AN EXPRESSION OF RELIGIOUS FEELING

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**M**USIC is a means, a vehicle. It is not an end in itself. Its harmonies, melodies, rhythms, and tonal colors have a certain charm in themselves, but if combined according to the laws inherent in these elements and after the pattern seen in the vision of the creative artist, there results an esthetic and spiritual reality which responsive souls will realize and in which they will rejoice.

Other arts have power thus to act upon the soul, but probably none so intensely and universally.

We repeat, and say, first: Music born of intelligence and imagination and fired by emotion has rare power to create emotional states; to cause an unwonted stirring of the feelings reacting upon the whole range of intellectual and spiritual capacity; second: It probably affects the emotional nature more deeply than other arts, while in universality of appeal it far surpasses them.

Accepting these characteristics of the musical art as true, its age-long service in religious worship is at once understood. What union more natural than that between the spiritual things which are "spiritually discerned" and the art whose real being must be felt, must be apprehended, rather than heard merely by the ear, or described in halting words. Marvelous as is the expressive quality of rightly chosen language, men are few who do not sometimes sing.

The Christian church has been, is, and will be, a singing church. What has the Church sung? What is the Church singing? What should the Church sing? The history of the Roman Catholic Church, of the Greek Catholic Church, of the Churches of the Protestant Reformation, including the Lutheran, and the English Episcopal, is rich in answer to the first question.

That there is a well-marked type of music in each of these divisions of the Church Universal is but a natural outcome of their different histories and ruling ideas. To ask whether one of them is more truly sacred music than another is to ask the unanswerable. Each has for centuries voiced the praises of God and been for men an expression of their deepest, unspoken prayer. Not one of these Churches but what has had, if we except the Nonconformist bodies which must be classed as recipients rather than creators, its great musicians who have done for religious worship of their day their noblest, most heartfelt work. It is from the storehouse of the fruits of their labor that the Church finds what it sings to-day in large part as truly as what it has sung in the past.

But the productions of the living have rightful claim to consideration and use if worthy. Many are of high, even highest excellence and have found their place. The esthetic and spiritual realities which are the true soul of music are unchanging, understood of all men, in all ages, in greater or lesser degree. But music has its outward dress, its different styles; and these vary and change as races vary from one another, as the ruling ideas of one age are other than those of preceding or succeeding ages. We cannot avoid being drawn toward the output of our own generation and the styles of our own day. The truths of thought and feeling common to all, understood and felt by all, are eternal. Both language and music must reincarnate them often as our race passes onward and upward in the unfolding of the plan of God. There are many embodiments of these truths so wonderful, so true, so fitting, and so sincere that the world will not let them die. We call these classic and they live because they deserve to live.

The Church sings these classics along with the songs of the present, and will do so with those of the future.

Music born of intelligence and imagination and fired by religious emotion is music that should be sung in Christian worship. Its style will, nay must vary, for to the widely differing groups of believers their songs must appear as a true and natural utterance of their own religious feeling. But it is true that the more perfectly these songs embody universal, unchanging emotional



truth the less we make account of their outward dress. Truth lies at the very foundation of Christian worship and the songs that truly voice the emotional experience of sincere souls in their religious life are fit for the use of the Church. There is something sacred, even religious about all the beauty of sound and of sight with which God has surrounded us and the presence or absence of the label "Church Music" is of little moment. If the composer was guided in his choice of tonal material by an esthetic and spiritual vision and refused to be satisfied until his work showed power to move the hearts of hearers and also for their good, then such music is fit for the Church because it is true and its influence is wholesome. It may be labelled sacred.

It would seem that musical works inspired by religious emotion, should be the greatest of all, and in proof we name Sebastian Bach in his "B minor Mass," Mendelssohn in the "Elijah," Händel in the "Messiah," Haydn in the "Creation," Mozart in the "Requiem," Beethoven in the "Ninth Symphony," with its choral conclusion, which though not religious can hardly be called anything less, and also his "Missa Solemnis." We do not usually remember that Franz Liszt wrote sacred music as well as brilliant pianoforte pieces and we do not recall any work in which his thought and feeling ring out with more of sincerity and honesty of expression than in his setting of the Thirteenth Psalm. Where has Brahms reached a higher level or seemed to speak more directly to our hearts than in his beautiful "German Requiem?" Beyond all doubt the English composers have done their worthiest work for the Church. Edward Elgar, the foremost modern figure among them has not surpassed and probably not equalled his "Dream of Gerontius" which though not intended directly for the Church is certainly inspired by religious ideas and feelings. César Franck, founder of the modern French school of composers, was first of all a devoted Catholic Christian, a church organist in Paris for many years, distinguished by his modest and loving spirit, writing music that in his best moments seems to breathe the very atmosphere of Heaven, and of him we say that his masterpiece is "The Beatitudes." In the days of Palestrina was there any nobler body of musical literature than that provided by him and his contemporaries for the Latin Church? Russian musical genius has given the world a very unique and deeply moving type of church music. Whether their contributions in other fields are greater we cannot decide, but we question whether they have shown more originality anywhere else.

Our non-liturgical churches have made but slight additions to the general stock, speaking comparatively. There have been and are musicians of ability and accomplishment in the non-liturgical churches, but there has not been the attainment of a distinct style nor the accumulation of a great wealth of material as in the case of the other religious bodies. Only a few typical names and compositions have been cited and they may stand for many other worthy names and for numberless works of splendid quality born in the heart of the Church Universal.

One cannot read the Psalms without the conviction which grows with every repetition that here is the poetic voicing of the deepest, highest, and most intense experiences possible to the soul of man. They were intended for singing, and from the day of their use in the Jewish temple until now they have been the foundation of very many of our sublimest musical productions.

It must not be overlooked that only the highest intelligence, the most vivid imagination and the deepest inspiration can bring forth works of the first order. If there is the commonplace to be found in church music its cause is to be discovered in the human agent and not in the lack of inspiring force in religious feeling.

What should church music to-day accomplish? Just what it has done in past generations: moving upon human feeling, quickening the powers of the intellect, and inclining the will to make choice. This inmost potentiality of music is not easily located, for music is nothing other than sound and movement combined according to natural and esthetic law, yet the sound and movement have no message unless the composer had a vision of truth and beauty leading him to choose certain sounds and certain movements and unite them in certain ways resulting in an utterance of blessing to him who has the ability to receive it. Is it necessary to have a critical knowledge of music in order to feel the majesty, the nobleness, the devotion, the tenderness, the sorrow and the whole range of the soul's experience which music so wonderfully voices? We are very sure that it is not. Music in the final analysis has only this to offer to the learned and skilful. Knowledge does mean more perfect insight, fuller sympathy unless, alas, it ends in the desert of pedantry and prejudice.

The conclusion then is that church music ought to be written by men of large intellectual and spiritual life, with hearts sympathetic and responsive, having the temper of the prophet who is first a beholder of visions and revelations and then an able, capable and faithful agent in conveying them to men for their

edification. Thousands of pages of church music have been written by just such men. The flood-tide of musical genius is not permitted to every generation, but the Church has perhaps always had its inspired musical prophets writing in the spirit of our ideal. But it is not enough to be sympathetic, and inspired by religious feeling. Musical law must be known and obeyed if perfect and permanent worth is to result. We see always two classes of mind about us; one intuitive, the other reasoning, one somewhat impatient of painstaking study and careful preparation, the other often inclined to think too lightly of imagination and of insight. There are musicians whose training is incomplete and faulty and who are not as ready to work hard as they should be, while there are others who stake everything upon labor and system. In the case of the one superficiality; in the case of the other dullness.

Let every man and musician sharpen his tools, but let him not be mastered by them.

But the whole duty is not the musician's. The Church has an equal obligation. Is the Church requiring of her musical servants the very best they can give? Is there no danger that they will be asked to cater merely to the passing fancy regardless of the real quality of that which thus pleases. Pleasure is certainly not the important end of public worship, even if it may be in the better sense a permissible accompaniment. Preaching is for the warning, the enlightenment, the upbuilding, of hearers, and music has absolutely no place in the Christian church unless it can in some way enforce the message of the minister. Ages of religious history prove that it can do so. It does to-day, when rightly used, just as always in the past it has done.

Periods of decadence in the quality and use of music in the Church, such as have many times occurred, must be ascribed to a public demand for something below the best that could have been given, or that the people should have asked to receive.

It cannot be asked that the whole world should receive and profit by the same type of religious music. This is not yet possible though it may be when all Christian men are true brothers in the universe of God, rather than members of a race and class. But that will mean an all inclusive type embracing the riches of all time and understood by all because of its inherent spirit and not on account of its outward dress.

For the present we may ask that every church be honest in its purpose to make its musical services directly contributory to the spiritual work with which it is charged. The Church is not

a club. Its object is not entertainment. The minister "seeks to persuade men" and the music must do likewise. The minister seeks to move men by the proclamation of the truth of God. Good music also speaks the truth of God to human hearts and enforces its message with an intensity peculiar to itself. The Church is doing its duty towards its musical servants when it makes plain to them that their obligation is met in "seeking to persuade men" through the power of their art; when it asks not to be entertained primarily, and when it receives with appreciation and sympathy that which is honestly offered. No musician can do work of an high order when more or less conscious of being expected to give only passing pleasure or to "show off." No one can work well with or for the unresponsive and coldly critical. Beautiful plants do not grow in such soil.

It is remarkable how much the spirit in men has to do with their understanding of and pleasure in each other's work. It is more fundamental than knowledge, which is apt to be divisive. I should be confident of better appreciation from an audience of earnest-minded, loving Christian people with but little acquaintance and knowledge in the world of good music, than from those of more intelligence and colder hearts. "Knowledge puffeth up, but love edifieth." There is a divine insight and quickness of perception in a true Christian heart which brings a degree of sympathetic understanding even where intelligence and taste are in a measure lacking. Good church music will be more at home and will advance more rapidly in the atmosphere of love without knowledge than in that of knowledge without love. When the love of God fills men's hearts they are drawn out naturally toward all the world of beauty, He has provided. They may not understand good music and may fear the word "classic," but if the deeper and truer spiritual meaning is really in the music they will find it in constantly increasing measure, providing only that the interpretative artist has himself found it first of all. The impulse towards perfection of character, of taste, and of knowledge is one of the first fruits of a vital faith and there is not much danger that a living church will fail to seek the best in music.

The question at once arises: What is best? In the first place that which has endured the severest tests, the test of time and wide use. In the second place that which seems most perfectly to serve the needs and voice the religious feelings of any group of people in their day, under their circumstances, and with their tasks to perform. It seems to me that it should not be such as to fail to command the respect of the intellect. On the other

hand it is worthless if it does no more than win a cold regard. I do not wish to feel less respect for the way I treat the mind, God has given me, when dealing with music than when engaged in any other intellectual operation. I would not withhold the simpler music from men, but I would ask them to be open-minded towards other forms of music which at first they might not understand. Good music heard, becoming familiar will make its own way. We need not, should not deprive ourselves of the benefit of the greater works of men because at first we do not grasp them. Anything unfamiliar is in a sense unfriendly, but let us be patient and become acquainted. If good music is heard often enough in a receptive mood it will explain itself better than a critical treatise can do. We think that any good music, sympathetically performed by one whose skill and understanding are adequate and whose one purpose is to bring a benefit to his hearers, will demonstrate its power. We cannot undertake to decide in a dogmatic way what music a church should sing. We have laid down certain principles which seem to us sound, and we may add that the best and noblest is in place nowhere if not in the house of God. I am not sure that we are always perfectly devoted to the best in our intellectual life in fields other than the musical. Is it possible that those who ought to do better are being taken with rather cheap and crude things? I do not think that the true charity which is some day to rule this world is leading thitherward. We must meet men musically as in other things where we find them. It is not necessary nor honest to remain there always.

It is difficult to feel that musicians who are not earnest Christian men and women are in place in Christian worship as helpers of the minister and we are sure that they have no other rightful office in the Church. If the musician is blind, unresponsive to, and unmoved by the truth the minister is speaking, he is in no position to enforce his message. He needs to feel the moving and inspiring power of the truth if he is to do his part worthily.

How often have the musicians been touched and moved in the deepest way by a strong, true sermon, and in turn the minister roused to speak with new warmth through the effect of some splendid piece of work done by his choir. We know that this happy condition of things is not uncommon in our land and we expect it to become universal. Minister and musician are to lean upon each other for the most sincere help in an end that is absolutely one in its purpose and aim. Each contributes his own absolute best; each strives and prays for the same divine result.

Between minister and musician first of all, the sympathetic understanding and considerate appreciation, after which some knowledge of each other's problems, field of work, etc., is of value. A little reading in Musical History and Appreciation would be helpful to the minister, and the musician who knows what has passed, and is passing in the world of Christian thought and activity will find his heart made warm for his task as no mere musical inspiration can insure.

It seems to me that merely to make music in church, unsympathetic towards the Church's great endeavor in the world, is to do a thankless thing and one of comparative fruitlessness. Given this right relation to the Church and its great work I should urge all the knowledge and skill for the church musician that is possible of attainment. Musical talent is very widely bestowed and there are few churches but what may find not a small number among their young people, fitted by their gifts for a splendid service as musicians. Let the proper opportunity for training be given these young people and the Church will be made glad by the service they will render. There is no conceivable artistic endeavor demanding more of ability, knowledge and consecration.



## A NOTE ON FLORIDITY

By W. J. HENDERSON

**F**LORID singing has passed through some vicissitudes. It is now viewed as a parade of vocal dexterity which has no inner artistic significance, and at best can excite no finer emotion than astonishment. This attitude has become so fixed that many fragile musical spirits are wounded by the singing of a trill in the music of sober Hans Sachs, although the archaic purport of the passage should be self evident. They are shocked again when a trill appears in the passage designed to proclaim the ebullient temperament of the laughing Valkyr. These stern Catos of the voice would banish all such vocal blossoms which, in their minds, are indistinguishable from Marguerite de Valois' paper flowers of song.

Nevertheless, the florid element has a firm and clearly planned æsthetic basis. It began in the regions of spiritual utterance. It was not transformed into empty coloratura singing till the singers had achieved their conquest of the lyric drama and set their feet upon the necks of the composers. Before that time floridity had at least its indisputable decorative value. Most genuine art has decorative quality. This, however, is too often snubbed by academic criticism, which is prone to concentrate its gaze on structural logic, thematic derivations, and other musical factors addressing themselves more directly to the powers of ratiocination.

If the scholars would more frequently and affectionately contemplate the purely emotional moods of music they would become convinced that even in this twentieth century florid song need not entirely relinquish its pristine search after a method of expression for thoughts not to be framed in words. And whenever this special and lofty employment of the florid element in vocal music cannot be utilized, the musician may still follow the practise of the first opera composers, who found it a vehicle to carry a combination of decoration and expression.

The history of florid song has been recounted in many places, but the connection between certain of its phases has not always been clearly pointed out. Certainly no great emphasis has been laid on the fact that in the first years of the development of

modern music by the church the use of florid phrases with texts was governed by an impulse similar to that which the Egyptians had when they glorified their gods with long flourishes on open vowel sounds.

More than two centuries before the Christian era Demetrius Phalereus had noted that the Egyptian priests did this. A little later Nichomachus gravely informs us that the seven planets each produce a certain sound and that the priests in their worship invoked their divinities with inarticulate tones and without consonants. The purpose, the author informs us, was to propitiate the genii who inhabit the stars of our system. The singing of the proper vowel set in vibration the necessary waves.

It is inessential to trace the numerous steps joining the ancient Egyptian music with that of the church. The Greeks borrowed the custom of carolling in honor of the gods, and the influence of Greek ideas on early Christian music is known to all students. But the adoption of the intent of florid song has been overlooked. Surrounded by the florid music of the orient, and, as we should suppose, inclined to shun this type of vocal utterance as unsuited to the solemn ritual of the new religion, we find that on the contrary the fathers soon admitted florid song to the sanctuary and that in its earliest phases it stands very close to that of ancient Egypt.

The infant church had two principal liturgies. That of Alexandria and neighboring Egypt was arranged by St. Mark. That of Jerusalem was prepared by St. James, the brother of Christ and the second bishop of the city. In both of these liturgies the Greek invocation, "Kyrie eleison," appears as a congregational response. In the Judean liturgy we find also the Hebrew exclamation, "Alleluia."

Of course, we have no record of the music which these oriental congregations employed in their kyries and alleluias. But historical evidence of a little later date justifies the inference that in the beginning the syllabic chant performed its normal function in delivering the utterances of the priest, while a less rigid and more vocal manner was chosen for the responses of the people. This latitude of musical utterance widened till the song became too difficult for the congregation, whereupon the singing of the responses, as well as other parts of the service, was transferred to a choir of trained singers. That the employment of extended musical treatment of the explanatory texts did not therefore cease must be manifest. Rather did the elaboration of the florid kyries and alleluias continue.

The latest authoritative studies of this subject are those of M. Amédée Gastoué, professor of chant in the Schola Cantorum, of Paris. His first summary of it is found in his "*L'Art Grégorien*." To set forth his points briefly, the books of Roman chant which have come down to us show a distinct unity of character. We have not many manuscripts, but the fidelity with which they were reproduced from the second half of the eighth to the ninth century assures us that we possess the chants of the Gregorian antiphony in the form which they had acquired at that period. Can we go back further—perhaps to Gregory himself? Most probably, for beside the unity of tradition, which is demonstrated, we have a criterion in the chants themselves.

Internal criticism reveals differences of style in certain chants. We know that in the second half of the seventh century some chants were added to the primitive Gregorian repertory. Now, when we come upon chants revealing a style of a period anterior to these, we are justified in believing that they were preserved in their authentic form, a form guarded piously by the Roman Schola Cantorum and attributed by it to its founder, Gregory.

At a considerably later date, writing his masterly articles in his "*Encyclopédie de la Musique et Dictionnaire du Conservatoire*," the same author states more definitely his conviction that we have in our possession not alone chants of the Gregorian period, but some of even earlier origin. After profound study of the liturgy of Milan, M. Gastoué is convinced that some of the Ambrosian chants are preserved in its books. He says:

The character of the Ambrosian melodies, approaching the Gallican and Roman style, is nevertheless wholly individual. The matter can be summed up briefly thus: in comparison with the Gregorian chant the simple melodies are very simple and the ornate ones very ornate. The simple chants have in general much charm: the luxuriant vocalises, on the other hand, do not present the artistic distinction which the Roman melodies ordinarily show. The study of the Ambrosian repertory is of puissant interest when one compares it with the Roman. In effect the liturgy of Milan has preserved a sufficient number of pieces which one finds again in the Gregorian ritual, pieces going back to the formation of these repertories. The Milanese chant gives us these pieces in their original state, often defaced, while the Roman presents them in an elaborate artistic form, or in the shape of a variation of the same theme.





While the conclusions of M. Gastoué are not identical with those of M. Gevaert in his well-known work on the ancient chant, they agree wholly with them in one vital matter, to wit: that we possess certain chants in their early forms and that from them we gain some substantial knowledge of the character of Christian church music in its childhood; for when we reach Ambrose we touch the last years of the fourth century. From this time, then, we may trace the progress of floridity in vocal music and determine its two-fold quality of emotional expression and artistic decoration. The attitude of the church toward the use of long flourishes on vowels is clearly defined in the remarks of St. Augustine on the *jubili*. "He who jubilates does not utter any words, but a joyous sound without words; for it is the spirit lost in joy, expressing it with all its power, but not arriving at a definition of its sense." Readers of musical history are acquainted with the state into which the floridity of ecclesiastic music had developed by the middle of the tenth century, particularly in the famous school of St. Gall. We may quote here two examples merely for the purpose of refreshing the memory:



Alleluia, Notker Balbulus



In the formative period of the lyric drama, which became the promised land for floridity, both secular and religious music

were potent influences. The secular music itself, despite its transformation into "*musica ficta*" by the employment of the leading note, adopted the airs and graces of floridity from ecclesiastic music. The researches of Pierre Aubry and Johann B. Beck have proved conclusively that the troubadours were mostly trained musicians, educated in the abbeys and in the courses followed by the young men preparing to take holy orders. The vital departure of the troubadour composers was their adoption of the vernacular instead of Latin for their texts and the consequent substitution of rhythm for quantity.

The troubadours played a very important rôle in the development of the "*Ars Nova*," as mensural music came to be called in Italy. Johannes Wolf, of Berlin, has written a monumental work, "*Geschichte der Mensuralnotation*," the fruit of many years of laborious research in European libraries. This book demonstrates beyond doubt that French and Italian composition from the middle of the thirteenth century to the middle of the fifteenth had made much greater progress than historians formerly believed. Secular music was moving steadily forward along the path opened by the troubadours and we continually find evidence of the use of floridity both for expressive and decorative purposes. Here is one example which will throw light on the matter.

From *Quant le Rossignol* by the Chatelaine de Coucy (1150-1197)



This old song antedates the works of the masters restudied and thus adequately revealed by Johannes Wolf. As a piece of troubadour composition it exemplifies the kind of music written by a nobleman educated in an abbey and composing under the influence of church music, but to secular text with clearly definite rhythm. In it we see some of the earliest specimens of an employment of floridity, which became conventionalized. The expansion of the melody in a decorative design on the words "flor" and "rose" belongs distinctly to the type of vocal art which utilizes floridity to combine external imitation with fanciful suggestion. It is a direct endeavor to employ a grace of music to convey a thought. It is primitive tone painting.

Let us not suppose that this kind of floridity began with the Chatelaine de Coucy (whose music has been quoted), or even with the troubadour body of songsters; but from their day its development in modern vocal composition can be clearly traced, and mayhap some historian, who has yet before him the years needed for the task, will be tempted to follow in its details the march of floridity from this estate of naïve beauty and delineation to its highest elevation and thence downward to its subsequent banality. The present writer is only making note of one or two phases.

Naturally we next turn our eyes to the uses of floridity in the *Ars Nova*. Beauty derived from the exercise of artistic purpose in music is perhaps not so young as historians have asked us to believe. It is incontestable that in the creation of the massive forms of church counterpoint the assembling of the technical materials occupied all the laborers till Josquin de Pres came to his maturity and found the clay ready for his moulding. The first works of imposing beauty in the field of church counterpoint were his; but beauty in vocal music had existed for at least two centuries before his time, and the composers of the *Ars Nova* period show a keen and almost unerring instinct for the employment of the graces and decorative features of song both as elements of pure musical beauty and as means of suggestion or expression.

They preserved the traditions of secular floridity in their musical settings of such words as "fior," "amore," "paradiso," and all the others which had come to be conventionally associated with thrills of ecstasy only to be expressed in a gorgeous exfoliation of the melody. One finds that the verb "cantare" invariably suggests the introduction of a display of vocal technic. Indeed,

Pro-ser-pl-na can-ta

va.



the most extraordinary feats of the composers and vocal virtuosi of the baroque opera (late 17th century) or of the post-Handelian decadence could not outdo the achievements of the *Ars Nova*. The vowel, "ah," is already established as the favorable medium of display. Here is a characteristic example from a two-voiced song by Lorenzo, of Florence, a fourteenth century writer. The text is taken from Wolf.

On the other hand there are many passages which prove that these early writers had already begun to disregard textual considerations. They respected conventions and continued them; but where no tradition governed, they wrote florid passages on such words as "per," "un" and even "e."

As already noted, the vowel sound "ah," which was so favorable to the Italian's emission of tone, was almost invariably vocalized at great length. Arteaga, writing in the latter half of the eighteenth century, was astonished because Pasquale Anfossi (1736-1797) in his "Antigone" employed nine measures of 16 notes each, or 144 notes in all, on the second vowel of the word "amato." Yet we have seen Lorenzo four centuries earlier writing eleven and one-half measures in ancient time of three whole notes to the bar on the second vowel of "cantava."

It should be noted at this point that these extended passages were not as long in duration of time as they look to us on paper. The notation of the early period was practised on a large scale. The whole note signifies a much longer tone now than it did in the days when composers set up a time signature of 3. It would probably be correct for us to regard the 3 of Lorenzo as equivalent to our three-fourth or possibly three-eighth measure.\* But while this gives a just view of the breath support demanded of these ancient singers, it does not in any way modify our deductions as to the attitude of the composers toward the nature and purpose of the florid passage.

The pages of the composers of the great epoch of polyphonic church music, masters who wrote also secular songs, show no definite aim at florid setting of words or vowels. I have read many hundreds of pages of their scores in the vain effort to discern any organized system in the employment of floridity except that dictated by the immediate demands of the canonic subject. The fluent passages are all essential parts of the musical thought, and their creation seems to be wholly the result of a feeling for the architectural interdependence of the voice parts. In other words,

\*For a masterly examination of this matter see "The Interpretation of the Music of the XVII<sup>th</sup> and XVIII<sup>th</sup> Centuries," by Arnold Dolmetsch. London, 1915.

these masters are engaged in making beautiful musical designs with religious expression as the ultimate result. In their art one finds that same combination of decoration with general expression that is to be observed in the church architecture of the period. The expression is never attained by means of delineative detail, but by the sum total of effects, of which most are essentially decorative in character.

Turning to the creations of the early composers of opera, we find that in the first moment floridity is reduced to a minimum. This was inevitable in a movement designed to overthrow the domination of polyphonic complexities. Caccini has told us in no uncertain words that his aims were the obliteration of counterpoint, the liberation of text from the restraints of "passages." Therefore in the stately recitatives of his score and of Peri's we see the ornamental exfoliations, which are very few, placed much as they were in the ecclesiastic music of the time. But in other writings of Caccini, such as the lyrics in his "Nuove Musiche," we find floridity in full bloom and with that complete decorative independence which so soon fell into abuse. Here are two examples of florid writing of the time. The first from the score of Marco da Gagliano's opera, "Dafne" (1608) and the second from the "Nuove Musiche" of Caccini.



The reader will note that the literary character of the vocalized words seemed to have no great weight with these musicians. An examination of the first real masterpiece in the operatic field, the "Orfeo" of Monteverdi, shows that the employment of florid figuration by this master was more dramatic at times. The noble recitatives of the first two acts contain no "passages." The first floridity appears at the opening of Act 3 when *Orfeo* addresses

*Charon*: "Orfeo son io." And even here floridity is continently employed and with obvious dramatic intent of illustrating Orfeo's personality as a singer. In the well-known ascension of Apollo and Orfeo to heaven comes the often quoted passage for the two voices moving in undulating thirds. Here, of course, the composer was following the antique method of musical delineation by imitation.

It would not be profitable to follow the progress of florid writing through the seventeenth century. The student of musical history is acquainted with the descent of opera from the lofty Hellenic plane on which it stood in its infancy to the low baroque level of the Venetian virtuoso period. In the years just before the revelation of Alessandro Scarlatti's genius the opera was merely a field for the exhibition of voice acrobatics, and hence floridity lost every shred of expression and even of true decorative beauty it ever possessed. From this time forward its claims to artistic recognition have been difficult to establish. Despite Mozart's triumphant demonstration of its utility in characterization (as in the instance of the Queen of the Night) the pale spectre of Rossini's "Semiramide" stalks before the public memory. It is discouraging even to invite attention to the dramatic purpose of Ambroise Thomas in his Ophelie's "mad scene," since the number survives only as a concert medium for a coloratura soprano's glorification. Even the other familiar "mad scene," that of Lucia, has some significance; but the world receives it as a mere piece of bravura.

In a paper on the art of the early English church composers read before the musical subsection of the Historical Congress in England last summer (1915) the eminent British scholar, W. H. Hadow, pointed out the progress toward free and independent musical expression made by Tallis, Byrd, Whyte and others of their type through the use of extended florid passages. At the same meeting Edward J. Dent, the distinguished Cambridge authority, read a paper on the influence of the operatic aria on the development of independent instrumental forms. We find him contending that the repeated settings of the same texts, notably those of Metastasio, made the public so familiar with these libretti that the composers felt at liberty to indulge in such musical elaborations as they chose. In effect, they were rendered independent by liberation from the demands of the dramatic situation.

Whatever conclusion we may form as to the precise application of these and various other reflections on the musical ideals

of the earlier times, we cannot fail to perceive that every critical student has been impressed by the evidences of a desire for expressiveness in designs too often described as purely decorative. The truth, as usual, lies somewhere between extremes. Every musician who has possessed a modicum of creative power has sought to make musical design, whether in its larger architectural expansions or in its infinite range of decorative details, a medium for the publication of his ideals.

In the age—if there ever was such an age—when absolute musical beauty without added expression was the aim of composers, the purely decorative elements of the art were but little more in evidence than they were in the beginning, when only a liturgy was in the musician's mind, or to-day when the most gorgeous colors of the orchestral palette are marshalled to make a sketch of the afternoon of a faun or a baby's ride in a perambulator. Floridity, the arabesque of melody, goes further than its counterpart in architecture, because it rests upon a musical principle, which was recognized even in the darkness before the dawn of lyric art. It is much wiser to admit its value and take advantage of its artistic utility than to endeavor to abolish it because its employment has at times been both extravagant and futile.

## RAFAEL JOSEFFY'S CONTRIBUTION TO PIANO TECHNIC

By EDWIN HUGHES

THE title of this article does not imply in the least a desire to place one of the most poetic of all pianists in the category of the keyboard mechanics. Of the grace and finesse of Joseffy's Chopin, the clarity of his Bach, the depth of his Brahms and Beethoven, of the wide catholicity of his taste, resulting in interpretations of Mozart and Liszt, of Schubert and Tschaikowsky that were equally true in conception and beautiful in execution, of all this alone a little volume might be written. Still, the fact remains that his most important legacy to the pianistic world is the work which he accomplished towards making the thorny path of technic more practicable and placing keyboard fluency and freedom a little nearer within reach of the aspiring student.

After he had given up his regular concert appearances, "to give the youngsters a chance," as he humorously put it, his best efforts were directed wholly along the line of advance in technical study. He composed little and his energies were taken up with his lessons, the editing of standard works of pianoforte literature and the compiling of that high-school of the pianist, the "School of Advanced Piano Playing," followed a decade later by his "First Studies," a work of even larger outward proportions. Not that he neglected the interpretative side in all this work,—he was far too great an idealist for that—but he wished first and foremost to remove from keyboard stutterers and stammerers those impediments to fluent expression which stood in the way of the untrammelled utterance of what music they had within them.

He was an indefatigable worker at his technical studies and his editions of piano compositions, even during the heated months of the year. The summer visitor who had succeeded after many questionings of the natives in discovering at last the half-overgrown lane which led to Joseffy's secluded retreat in the woods

of North Tarrytown, and who had scaled the steep, winding ascent to the summit of the hill on which his house was perched, was almost certain to find him seated behind a table full of music and manuscripts on the vine-shaded veranda, in company with the inevitable cigar, poring over some newly-discovered fingering or some ingenious technical figuration. His own practise he kept up quite religiously, except in the summer months, so that he was always in condition to illustrate the most difficult passage at the second piano, or to play in public if need be. The diffidence to public performance in his later years resulted from the growing fear that he might not be able to reach those same heights which he had previously attained with ease. Rather than have it whispered about in the public or blazoned forth in the press that Joseffy's art at the piano was not that of years gone by, he chose to withdraw almost completely from the concert stage, leaving those who had known his playing at its best with an indelible impression on their musical consciousness. Perhaps he was mistaken in his idea, and wrong in depriving music-lovers of some of their most exquisite moments, for the fact is that in later years, when he did occasionally overcome his supersensitiveness so far as to appear at long intervals in public, he was always the object of stormy ovations and his playing seemed to have lost little, if any, of its old charm.

During the years of his retirement from concert-life he devoted a large part of his time to teaching, and the dissemination of his ideas on piano study among the younger generation of American musicians may be looked upon as one of the most important phases of his whole musical activity. Pupils came to him from far and wide, from all parts of the United States as well as from Canada. Teaching he held to be an art, just as much as playing, and therefore he believed in limiting the hours given over to pupils to not more than three each day, or, if the daily period exceeded this time, in confining the teaching to two or three days of the week. His idea was that if lesson-giving went beyond such limits, the teacher could not possibly give his best to the pupil, and that the whole matter sank in consequence from the level of an art to that of a handicraft. The great teacher must also be an equally excellent pianist according to Joseffy's manner of thinking. He must be familiar with the entire piano-forte literature, must be able to illustrate at the second piano everything that he teaches, and must possess such a highly developed analytical faculty that he is able to recognize and impart the all-important "how" in distinction from the "what."



The mere playing of a piece at the second piano with the remark, "I do it this way," he considered of little help to the pupil, unless the very necessary explanation of the process were also forthcoming.

Such ideals were at the foundation of his work as a teacher. For a certain class of teachers in New York who make a specialty of the fashionable dilettante, charging for lessons a price suitable to the character of their patronage and taking anyone as pupil who is able to pay the stipulated amount, Joseffy had a fine scorn. He himself would have nothing to do with such pupils, and he regarded mere venders of music-lessons as quite unworthy of the respect of the serious musician.

For the real master of the art of teaching, however, he was not backward with his admiration, in spite of his own exalted position as a pedagogue. He often spoke, for example, of Leschetizky as a great teacher, and wondered why he did not write something himself about his pedagogical methods, instead of leaving this matter to others, or why he did not at least give out more or less comprehensive editions of the classics, which would have meant much the same thing to the student. Busoni and Barth he also admired as teachers, while he recognized in d'Albert the complete lack of the pedagogical talent. Although he was very fond of MacDowell personally, he had no great admiration for him as a piano teacher. MacDowell's technical exercises he praised, but considered it a rather remarkable fact that he did not use them to better effect with his own pupils, some of the latter having come to Joseffy unable to play a scale.

Always an enthusiastic champion of Henselt as a composer, whose wane in popularity he attributed to the desire of the present-day public to "always see blood," Joseffy admired greatly this pianist's useful and self-sacrificing pedagogical work as musical inspector of the imperial seminaries for girls in Russia, where, although he did not develop any exceptionally brilliant geniuses, he did incalculable good in raising the general standard of musical education. Although Joseffy was himself a pupil of Liszt in 1870-71, the great Hungarian master was not Joseffy's ideal as a teacher, as he neglected the technical side of piano playing entirely at the lessons. To Tausig, however, Joseffy felt that he owed more than to anyone else. He was his ideal as a pianist—Joseffy rated him higher even than Liszt in this respect—and there can be no doubt that the two impressionable youthful years spent with Tausig gave that mighty artistic impetus to the

young pianist which carried him to the lofty pinnacle in European musical life a few seasons later.

At his own lessons Joseffy was a great source of inspiration to his pupils. When he felt that he had a responsive intellect at his side, he spared himself no pains in the careful elucidation of his points. His ideas on fingering were illuminating and his methods of practise for overcoming specific technical difficulties in the study matter were quite invaluable. Although he laid great stress on matters of technical detail, he was not to be dazzled by a merely technically brilliant performance. When a new pupil came to him and tried to make an impression with some showy composition he would ask for a Bach Prelude or a Mendelssohn Song without Words. "You may be able to play that technically difficult composition," he would say, "and still not be able to play the piano. From a Bach Prelude or a Mendelssohn Song without Words I can tell right away just how much of a musician you are." Pupils who at the first interview tried to foist upon him an unripe performance of such works as the Appassionata or the E minor Concerto of Chopin as samples of their pianistic prowess did not usually succeed in earning anything better than his deep disgust.

When he was engaged at one of the New York conservatories, he used to teach in class, having about eight pupils from two to six o'clock in the afternoon. Class work he considered excellent for interpretation, as each pupil is able to hear the others and to gain from criticism, but for technical work he considered it impossible, holding that technic could be properly taught only at private lessons. He believed in giving to less advanced pupils pieces and studies that were within their technical reach, and he was very much put out at an assistant of his who tried to do too much with his pupils by giving them such things as piano arrangements of the Bach organ fugues instead of the Well-Tempered Clavichord, and Chopin Etudes instead of those by Cramer and Clementi, and thus spoiling them for the class work. He was in favor, however, of more advanced pupils trying their mettle on very difficult compositions, even at the risk of failure in the technical mastery of such tasks.

In the selection of works for study Joseffy was very particular in choosing "pieces that help," that is, things that would increase the pupils' technical experience and ability. He considered it rather a waste of time to study pieces that were valuable as studies in interpretation alone, and which would have no bearing on the technical advancement of the pupil. Not, be it said, that he

wished here to make a musical distinction, but simply that from the standpoint of the student of the instrument he held it to be a more profitable use of time to busy one's self with things that were on the direct highway to a mastery of the technical resources. He certainly would not have placed the first movement of the Schumann Fantasia on a musically lower plane than the opening division of the Chopin B minor Sonata, yet he did not consider the former of any use whatsoever as a study piece, while the latter he ranked very high from this standpoint. Of the Tschai-kowsky B flat minor Concerto he said, "After you have studied it, you have learned absolutely nothing but the Tschai-kowsky B flat minor, whereas after you have studied the Chopin Concerto you know something more when you are through than merely the works you have been studying." The Scharwenka Staccato Etude was a help on the road to the pianistic Parnassus, while such pieces as the Brahms Intermezzi were of little or no aid to the ambitious scaler of dizzy technical heights.

These ideas in regard to piano study were simply the result of Joseffy's differentiation of virtuoso piano playing and the *Kapellmeister* sort. He made a sharp distinction between the pianist and the musician who merely plays the piano, and he knew full well that there are many persons of the latter type who could attempt the Brahms's Intermezzi, the Schumann Fantasia and the Tschai-kowsky B flat minor Concerto and get away with them after a fashion, but to whom the F minor Concerto of Chopin or the D minor of Mozart would remain a sealed book. "It is curious," he once said, "that people who cannot play the piano can yet play the Grieg Concerto. One has just to know how to play a few chords. That and the Rubinstein D minor anyone can do."

He emphasized most strongly the importance of combining technical practise with the study of pieces, his idea being to take the most difficult passages and construct even more difficult technical studies from them. In the invention of such exercises he was an adept. It will suffice to recall one example of his ingenuity in such matters; namely, his exercises on the long octave passage for the right hand in the Schumann Toccata, as they appear in his study edition of that composition. The original, beginning thus





he recommended to be practised as above in several keys, and in the left hand as well as the right. After the study of similar clever variants on this and other difficult passages, the original reading seems mere child's play in comparison.

About the position of the hands at the keyboard he was very particular, requiring a certain roundness in appearance of every part in normal playing position, and in octaves and skips the most advantageous position for their execution; in skips letting the hand tilt slightly in the direction of the movement, in octaves holding the wrist slightly raised, the outer fingers gripping the keys with tong-like surety and firmness. As very valuable for octave work he recommended practise of such passages with the wrist held very low, a difficult proceeding, which makes the passage seem many times easier when played afterward in correct position. Tremolo practise he considered of great importance for acquiring strength and endurance.

He himself had a pair of ideal piano hands, short, thick, supple and muscular, the kind that knead the tone out of the keyboard, full, round and luscious. Asked once if large hands were not an advantage in piano playing he replied, "Oh! a man may have big hands and still be a big fool."

In practising his idea was that one must work either for perfection or for endurance. To achieve the former one goes over and over the passage, slowly and carefully, until it is thoroughly learned. Once he said to me smilingly, in regard to a certain arpeggio passage in the first movement of the G major Concerto of Beethoven, "That you must repeat 50,000 times until it is absolutely perfect." In practising for endurance one must play through the entire section of a piece, or the entire exercise or series of exercises, without stopping, no matter how tired one became or what mistakes were made. One must learn to overcome fatigue, must train one's self to be able to carry a

tiring section through to the end without any outward traces of weariness.

For the technical perfecting of an oft-recurring figure or passage Joseffy recommended taking it in the various keys or transformations in which it might occur during the course of the piece and making a special study of these different forms with disregard (for the time being) of the rest of the composition. He called attention to the advantage of transposing short pieces in the *étude* style, such as the G major Prelude of Chopin, an excellent technical study for transposition into G flat. Also, he advised the practise with the left hand of some of the Chopin *Etudes* in which the right hand has difficult passage work in the original, the A minor, op. 10, no. 2, for example, calling attention to the fact that Tausig had followed this proceeding and recommended it to his pupils long before the Godowsky left hand arrangements put in their appearance. In regard to scale practise he recommended a week's work on ordinary scales, followed by a week in which only difficult scale passages from various pieces were studied. Practising without looking at the hands he regarded as a valuable aid for sureness. In difficult arpeggio or passage work he advised a very flexible wrist, moving from side to side as the difficult crossings demanded.

After his pupils had reached a certain degree of development he recommended to them to go abroad for further study, not so much because he considered European teaching superior on the whole to American, but because the pupil should have the advantages offered by European musical life and experience, still immensely superior to those in America. "If a student wants to hear a Mozart opera here in New York, it is impossible for him to do so," he once had occasion to remark regretfully. Not only in the domain of the opera but in practically every other branch of music, excepting purely virtuoso performances, Joseffy recognized the advantage for the talented young musician of musical opportunities in Europe when compared to those offered in America. He did not think very highly of conservatory education, but was rather for study under private teachers of ability and standing.

While he fully knew what an intimate contact with European musical affairs means to the American student, yet he deprecated strongly the general lack of appreciation of native musicians in America. Once he remarked, "It is strange that with all the democratic feeling here, Americans will still run to any foreigner who comes over and advertises a bit. A German or a Russian

pianist is always somebody, and perhaps we may some day even have a Japanese pianist touring America, for they are so quick to adopt our western civilization. It is only the American product which is not given a fair chance."

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There are probably few modern pianists who have gone into the matter of fingering with such minute detail as Joseffy. With him fingering was almost an art in itself. At the lessons, in his books of technical studies, and in his editions of pianoforte works this matter was always uppermost in his mind. Fingering and tone quality he considered inseparable, the latter depending almost entirely on the former.

He was always a great stickler for niceties in fingering, and the quality of refined elegance which his own playing possessed in so high a degree was doubtless due in a great measure to this characteristic. He was always the gentleman at the piano, and there was a certain exquisite grace in every movement of his hands on the keyboard. Single detached notes in the middle of the instrument he liked to have taken with the second finger, largely on account of the very appearance of the thing, and nothing irritated him more than the amateurish habit of playing single bass notes with any other than the fifth finger, simply to make things easier. He was opposed to any such proceeding as juggling a passage between the two hands, contrary to the original intention of the composer, in order to make the execution less difficult. In fact I cannot recall a single instance either at the lessons or in works of his editing in which he made any such change. When there were technical difficulties he believed in learning to overcome them, and not in trying to get around them through some makeshift or other. There is a cadenza in the Sixth Rhapsody of Liszt which in the original reading for one hand is technically quite difficult, if the requisite cataract of tone is to be developed, but which becomes astonishingly easy of execution through a simple division of the hands, and which is usually so performed. But Joseffy would have none of this sort of thing. "If you cannot play that cadenza with one hand," he would say, "you cannot play the Sixth Rhapsody."

Fingering, he believed, should be made to conform with the average piano hand, although exceptional hands might of course take exceptional fingerings. In practising he advised the study of single passages with various fingerings, and then the



selection of the one which fitted itself most naturally into the hand for use when playing. At the lessons he was quite happy when he found that a pupil was making progress in the correct choice of fingerings.

The most clever solutions of difficult problems in fingering always occurred to him, and his re-fingering of an uncomfortable passage often led to the most exquisite perfection in its technical execution. As an example of the cleverness with which he overcame awkward situations, the following illustration from the *Larghetto* of Chopin's F minor Concerto may be quoted:



The mere comparison of this ingenious solution with the usual clumsy marking of the passage is sufficient to show the cleverness of Joseffy's ideas in such matters. The following chromatic passage from the Chopin Etude, op. 25, no. 2, fingered after the manner indicated, fits the hand of the pianist like a glove and is typical of the nicety of Joseffy's workmanship:



In the selection of study editions for his pupils the matter of fingering always took a position of first importance. Of the Klindworth editions of Chopin and Beethoven he was a great admirer, largely on account of the excellence which he ascribed to Klindworth's manner of fingering, although he was not always in favor of the many liberties which this editor allowed himself in the way of textual emendations, preferring Mikuli's Chopin for accuracy of text. Bülow he thought went a bit too far in some of his notes to the Beethoven sonatas, and he did not consider him very modern in the matter of fingering. "Klindworth has often expressed things of more importance in his mere marks

of fingering than Bülow in his notes," he said. "With Klindworth no notes are needed; every finger talks." Klindworth he considered a veritable genius at fingering, saying, "As you study Klindworth's Chopin you will always be learning something valuable about fingering. Klindworth is always correct, that is, he always follows out his laws of fingering logically." The Clara Schumann edition of her husband's works Joseffy considered insufficient on account of the lack of marks of fingering, preferring the edition given out by Bischoff as the best makeshift, but not regarding it as an ideal Schumann edition. One of the most excellent things which Joseffy called to my attention in the way of fingering was the Tausig edition of Beethoven's G major Concerto. Here one can really speak of the "art" of fingering, for the editing in this respect is the work of a past master.

Joseffy's own editions of the works of various composers were not the result of a hasty impulse to do something of the sort, but rather the culmination of the study of a lifetime. He told me once that he had always had it in mind, even during his earlier years, to some time edit the standard works of the piano-forte literature, and to this end he always made copious notes as to fingering, methods of practise and so forth, on all the numbers which he studied for his concert programs. He had an extreme dislike of editors of classical works which had been gone through, fingered and annotated by mediocrities. I remember his remark on seeing an edition of the Schubert-Liszt song transcriptions, to which were attached as editors, the names of two otherwise obscure musical personalities, "X. and Y! Gott, what a combination!" and, "If the publishers want to put out a Liszt edition, why don't they get someone worth while for it, like Busoni," modestly omitting himself.

His great works on technic, the "School of Advanced Piano Playing" and the "First Studies," were also the result of lifelong compilation, connotation and collation of all manners of technical experiments which occurred to him during long years of most painstaking study and most exacting demands on the technical possibilities of the instrument. His "Advanced Piano Playing" he did not expect every one to use. "It is only for very advanced pianists—but for such it is very fine. It may seem a little arrogant for me to say that of my own book, but all pianists who have examined it have admitted it." This was the only thing I remember ever having heard Joseffy say in praise of himself or his works. When anything about himself or his achievements came up in the course of a talk, he always gave the conversation

a sudden shove in the opposite direction. He had a very small opinion of most of his own piano compositions, and once when I expressed a desire to study something of his he replied, "Oh! I don't know that there is much of anything worth while for you to study. Maybe the Czardas; but I don't like it much myself." He was in fact the most modest of men, having none of the bravado and braggadocio which one is so accustomed to associate with the virtuoso who has conquered the concert audiences of two continents. A mention of the fact that Rosenthal had declared that he owed all his technic to Joseffy was met with a joking depreciation, and in looking over Joseffy's interesting collection of manuscripts and autograph letters, the communication from Liszt in which the latter names Joseffy as his successor and pianistic heir, was passed over in a jiffy: its contents were discovered only afterward through another source.

But in spite of Joseffy's opinion of his own work on technic he often found words of praise for the technical studies of others. "Mason," he said, "has some good ideas in his 'Touch and Technic,' and Moszkowski has written a rather remarkable book on double notes, showing that he would make a good pedagogue if he wished." I. Phillip's technical studies he spoke of with appreciation, also of A. K. Virgil's work along this line. Pupils who came to him after studying the Virgil technic he found usually well schooled in this direction, although he regarded the Virgil exercises as studies in "mechanism, not technic." He had a practise clavier and used it often for his own technical work. Of Hugo Mansfeld's book, "New Technic," he said, "Why does he call it 'New Technic'? There is nothing new in it." He made this same criticism on most of the modern works on technic, but was quick to approve of a new idea when he recognized it as such.

The "School of Advanced Piano Playing," regarded as a collection of the material necessary for the achievement of the higher technical possibilities of the instrument, stands on the shoulders of all previous collections of technical studies and is certainly the most modern and comprehensive work of the kind in existence. The "First Studies" are rather too diffuse in scope to justify their title, for many of the technical problems therein would put even very advanced pianists on their mettle. The earlier work appears as a happy crystallization of the matter at hand, complete, practical and without redundancy; the later volume, while it has the advantages of textual notes, (lacking in the earlier book) and thus enables the student to get a clearer idea of the

author's methods of touch and how to utilize the various exercises in practise, is to a large extent a re-presentation of a great deal of the ground covered in the first work, a new and, on the whole, less successful attempt to solve many of the problems which had already been met and disposed of in such a masterly manner.

The "Advanced Piano Playing" combined such strikingly clever innovations in the way of technical exercises that it would be hardly possible to expect even such an ingenious discoverer along these lines as Joseffy to surpass himself in a second effort. Opening the earlier book at the first page, the "five-finger exercises," the student finds an entirely novel presentation of a time-worn problem, a veritable mountain of technical difficulty in simple guise. The holding of the initial note in the progressing groups of five and the cleverly invented opposition of finger groups to rhythmic groups place these super five-finger exercises in a class quite by themselves.



The matter of holding one or more notes while the other fingers are in action has been carried out by Joseffy throughout this work in a most systematic and exhaustive manner, wherever the character of the technical problem makes the process possible, and there can be no doubt that, with the proper precautions against stiffening, this proceeding leads in short order to a high degree of finger strength and independence.

The introductory exercises in thirds exhibit a new idea in the practise of double notes; I have seen in it no previous work on technic. I speak of the following ingenious arrangement, in which of course the voices may also be reversed, and which may be used not only for thirds, but for sixths and all sorts of other double-note combinations.



In the octave exercises, the stress laid on the strengthening of the outer fingers before the wrist movements are taken up, is of the utmost importance, for fully as much bad octave playing comes from the inability of the player to achieve absolute, unyielding firmness in the position of the hand as from lack of strength and suppleness in forearm and wrist.

The exercises in various kinds of touch in both the books are, many of them, unique, and demand the highest degree of independence, not only between the two hands, but between the different parts of each separate hand. The same may be said of the rhythmic studies, of which those in the "Advanced Piano Playing" are by far the more elaborate and valuable. The exercises for the thumb and little finger, of which excellent examples are found in both books, including some even with the thumb on two keys, are novel and important, and the studies for changing fingers on one key quite exhaust the possibilities of the subject.

Joseffy's method of practising the glissando is one that will be appreciated by all those players who on account of weakness in the hand, thin fingers or sensitive finger tips find such passages difficult. One begins by skimming the surface of the keyboard lightly with the bent finger, allowing only the nail to touch the keys, gradually adding more weight each time until finally the tone comes, very softly at first, then fuller and quite full in quality as more pressure is added. The practise of the glissando is something that at all events should be gingerly indulged in and not carried to the extent of sore and perhaps bleeding finger tips. It is a historical legacy of piano playing, however, and as such the modern pianist must be familiar with its execution. Besides its occurrence in the works of Beethoven, Weber and Liszt, it is found even in the compositions of such an opponent of a purely virtuoso treatment of the instrument as Brahms.

Among the exercises in the "First Studies" which are both original and important are those dealing with sureness in large skips, accompaniment figures for the left hand alone and the training of the eye to watch different parts of the hand while playing. The fact that it is an exceedingly difficult matter to play an octave passage, for example, looking at the fifth finger instead of the thumb, unless one has made this a matter of special practise, was first called to my attention by Joseffy. Anyone who

has never made this experiment at the keyboard will probably be very much surprised at its awkwardness when first attempted.

In all these studies there is the indubitable evidence of the musician as distinguished from the mere maker of exercises, at every point where the solution of the technical problem makes at all possible the appearance of the fine hand of the artist. This is one of the chief claims to their exalted position among works of the kind. The "Advanced Piano Playing" in particular is so full of clever inventions that there is a refreshing lack of dryness about the whole. There are few artists of Joseffy's rank who have been interested enough in the technical side of piano playing to have busied themselves to such an extent and with such success as he did, with mere technical matters, without at the same time losing to some extent their grip on the purely musical side of the art, as they have acquired more interest and adroitness in keyboard jugglery. With him the "how," all important as it is to the reproductive artist, was, at the end, always servant to the "what," and although the very manner of his playing in itself often reached those heights which great virtuosi sometimes attain, where the performance itself is of such marvellous beauty that it seems to transcend entirely the subject matter of the composition, his art was not of the sort which deliberately aims at such a result. A mere virtuoso would never have given himself up to the pioneer work of making propaganda for Brahms' piano compositions at the time and with the loving enthusiasm that Joseffy did.

It is a good deal of a pity, from the student's point of view, that the "Advanced Piano Playing" is so absolutely devoid of text, that discussions of method and directions for practise are almost completely lacking. In the "First Studies" Joseffy evidently started out with the firm intention of "making good" this matter, and although he succeeded in a measure, the text is, as a whole, quite insufficient; all too many important matters are left completely untouched. Perhaps in future editions of the works this hiatus may be bridged over through the aid of some editor who is intimately familiar with the author's aims and thoroughly in sympathy with his ideals.

It may be said in general that Joseffy recommended practising many of his own studies, as well as difficult passages in pieces and études with various qualities of touch, first with normally raised fingers, then with high fingers, with the pressure touch, finger staccato, wrist staccato, using both high and low wrist,



and finally with the normal finger touch again, employing various degrees of power for the several repetitions and making use also of the crescendo and diminuendo. Above all he required that the fingering of his studies be adhered to with extreme care, the technical value of the exercises depending largely on their being practised with the fingering marked. He was extremely particular about rests and accents, insisting upon great accuracy in these matters. Although he mentioned the fact that no great pianist has practised with the metronome, he realized the importance of this instrument in technical work for the large majority of students and recommended its use to grade progress in velocity.

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As a whole Joseffy's attitude towards the development of technic may be regarded as conservative. He would never have recommended any such unconventionalities, for example, as that of using the thumb doubled up against the fist to produce a particularly strong accent; he would have met such a contingency by inventing exercises with the specific object of strengthening the thumb to the point where it would be able to master the situation in its normal relation to the keyboard. He established for himself certain principles of technical procedure, and he believed in applying them to all circumstances. If they proved seemingly insufficient in some cases, it was the fault of the imperfection of the individual technical apparatus, and not of the principles. Although, in view of the most modern developments in piano playing, his mode of procedure, his method, may seem to some a trifle old-fashioned, this cannot be conceded to imply criticism of the *material* for technical development which he has left us in his two books of studies. As to the originality and cleverness in the presentation of the subject matter, the wealth of new ideas and the completeness of material which these two volumes exhibit, there is little room for cavil.

Joseffy's own playing underwent a marked change during the years following his coming to America. Those who heard him in the earlier part of his career describe the dainty elegance of his performances, the wonderful grace and the unequalled technical perfection of his style. They gained for him the sobriquet of the "Patti of the piano." But Joseffy soon lost his taste for mere miniature at the keyboard; he joined the modern movement whose ideal lay in the direction of big tone and big piano playing. After a period of self-immolation spent in perfecting his new

manner, he surprised his former admirers by appearing now as one of the very Titans of the instrument, at the same time retaining the delicacy and charm of his older style. Wilhelm Gericke once said to me in Vienna, speaking of Joseffy's performance of the Rubinstein D minor Concerto with the Boston Symphony Orchestra under his leadership, "His tone was so enormous and there was such a broad sweep to his playing that it seemed like a veritable re-incarnation of Rubinstein himself."

In speaking of the younger generation of pianists Joseffy once said, "There are so many young pianists now-a-days, all of whom have fine technic, that only those who are very exceptionally gifted can hope to shine by technical superiority. It seems to me that they must aim at more musicianship now, instead of at so much technic. And what programs they play! Who wants to hear nothing but little things and show pieces? One must play the big things."

And so with all the loving care with which he worked at his technical problems, filing, polishing, refining, all this was merely labor along the highway. His eye was ever fixed on the far-off goal, the perfect blending of eminent virtuosity with equally eminent musicianship.

Joseffy lived so long in America and did so much of his most important work among us that we are quite justified in thinking of him affectionately as "our Joseffy." Although occasionally the feeling came over him that he might find a broader field for the unfolding of his activities in one of the German art centers, it never grew so strong as to induce him to break the ties which held him to New York, and he remained a good American to the very end. On his last visit to Europe, during the summer of 1913, he was on pins and needles the whole time to get back to his work and his own congenial surroundings in America, and this matter contributed very probably to the causes of the nervous breakdown which he suffered after his return. His entire interest and activity were centered in the development of his sphere of musical art in America. May the influence of his refined artistry and of his high ideals be felt for many years to come. Among those whose opportunity it was to come into more intimate contact with Rafael Joseffy, the sincere artist and generous-hearted friend will remain an ever fresh memory.

## THE SURVIVAL OF MUSIC

By HENRY F. GILBERT

NOT long since one of our most eminent American music critics propounded the inquiry: "Who can account for the survival or disappearance of musical works?" He proceeded to specify numerous compositions by Dvořák, Tchaikovski and Gounod which were formerly welcomed with great acclaim, but which are now fast falling by the wayside. After calling attention to the apparently inexplicable fact of the survival of Rossini's "Barber," with its old-fashioned formulas and methods of procedure, he concluded by saying, "Truly this is a little world of great mysteries."

The original inquiry is in the nature of a leading question inasmuch as it suggests an answer. Especially to a person of my philosophically pugnacious temperament does it act quite as a challenge. My own viewpoint presses itself upon me with such an insistence that I cannot forbear giving it utterance. Let us see, therefore, what we can accomplish by analysis and reflection toward contributing a satisfactory answer to this question.

What is it which makes some music to live; to be held in loving remembrance, and other music to fade from the memory and soon be forgotten? One is tempted to say at once that it is the melody in a piece of music which causes it to live; or the lack of it which causes it to be forgotten.

This is superficially true. In fact, it has a dangerous plausibility. But there are melodies and melodies. Many pieces of music die and are forgotten which nevertheless are very melodious. Others, again, in which the melody does not apparently play such an important part, will live a long time. The truth of the matter is that as long as we look at the externals of music merely, this point will not only puzzle us very much but really no satisfactory explanation of existing musical phenomena can be arrived at.

By the externals of music I mean Rhythm, Melody, and Harmony. We are told that music consists of these three things. Many persons indeed would fain have us believe that this is all it consists of.

But how about the spirit of the thing? Rhythm, Melody and Harmony are certainly the materials of music, but their

combination into a piece of *true* music depends upon something other than a mere knowledge of the laws of Rhythm, Melody and Harmony. Most of us recognize a piece of *true* music at once. In some mysterious manner it captivates and compels us to listen to it, whereas, when we hear a piece of *made*, or artificial music, we usually have to compel ourselves to listen. In fact it may be said that while true music compels us, its counterfeit insists that we compel ourselves. Yet both are constructed of the same elements: Rhythm, Melody and Harmony. It looks, therefore, as if the life or death of a certain piece of music did not depend *per se* on these elements, but upon the spirit which their combination may or may not express.

Ditters von Dittersdorf used practically the same tonal elements in his music as did Mozart. His rhythms, the turn of his melodies, and his harmonic schemes, were much the same. Yet his name is making very rapid progress toward the limbo of complete forgetfulness, whereas Mozart is still very much alive. Also Eberl, who was actually held up as a model for Beethoven, is now somewhat dead whereas, if I remember rightly, Beethoven was *facile princeps* as far as number of performances in the last musical season in New York.

No; many can combine the same elements of music and yet there shall be a difference. Yet so cunningly are these elements combined that this difference shall not be at once apparent, and most contemporaries will be unable to distinguish between *true* music; *i. e.*, that which is genuinely inspired or written in response to a spiritual need of expression, and *made* music, or that which is the fabrication of a clever intellect, and which is lacking in any spiritual or ideal content.

Now, a musical composition is a fabric. Like a piece of cloth, a rug, or a tapestry, it is woven from threads. But the threads from which a musical composition is woven are bits of melody; melodic particles, or motives. (If any one doubts this let him examine a well recognized musical masterpiece, such as a Beethoven symphony, or Wagner's "Meistersinger"). And inasmuch as these melodic threads are in themselves of value or character, will the completed fabric be beautiful and durable, assuming always that the weaving is skilfully done. But skilful weaving alone is not enough. The threads themselves must be strong, and full of character, otherwise the fabric, however skilfully woven, will not be significant or durable. There are many skilful musical weavers about at present, and at first sight it seems difficult to explain the apparently undeserved neglect which much

of their magnificently done work receives. But on careful examination it will usually be found that the melodic threads of their fabrics are of poor quality and lacking in distinction. These composers find their justification in a remark which Haydn is said to have made: "Not the theme, but the treatment." To take this remark literally is, however, very dangerous. I will venture to say that the compositions in which Haydn took his own medicine are not by any means the most vital and longest-lived of his creations.

This brings us naturally to the subject of folk-song. Of all classes of music, folk-song can produce the greatest number of examples of longevity, and it is but natural that we should turn to them to seek the reason of this length of life. In the first place, their comparative simplicity undoubtedly has much to do with it. Folk-songs are complete melodic compositions. They neither require nor depend upon accompanying harmony for their effect, and they are usually not of any great length. All these factors certainly help them to be easily retained by the memory, but they do not to my mind account satisfactorily for their exceptionally long life; in some cases a matter of centuries. Not all folk-songs are of equal musical value. The mere fact that a melody is a folk-song does not absolutely guarantee its high musical value. The indefatigability of collectors, and the ease with which the results of their labors are preserved—owing to the art of printing—has caused many a melody which would otherwise have died young to appear to have obtained quite a respectable old age. But there are a large number of folksongs, such as "The Campbells are coming," "Malbrouck," "My lodging is on the cold, cold ground," etc., of undoubted antiquity, and which have attained their old age by the natural means of being held with affection in the mind and heart of the people. I firmly believe that these would have lived even were there no folk-song collectors and no printed collections. The fact that they are of simple construction undoubtedly assisted in their preservation, but certainly was not the determining cause. The cause of the long life of these melodies is, firstly, that they express elemental human emotion; they awaken feelings of joy and sorrow, of mirth or tenderness which are common to us all, which lie deep in our hearts, and which we instinctively recognize as that which gives to life its beauty and significance. And secondly, that they are well-nigh *perfect expressions* of these heart qualities. There is a most fortunate harmony between the emotion expressed and the means of its expression. There are no superfluous notes,

but just enough. The intellect is in its true place as the servant and aid to expression, and is never allowed to assume the position of dictator as to what shall be expressed, as it so frequently does in art music.

Seldom, indeed, do we notice in our symphonic music this fortunate harmony between that which would find expression and the means of that expression. Too often we find it interesting, or clever, or technically well composed, etc. But when the emotion is deep and strong, and the technical means of expression adequate but not in evidence, then do we cease to think of technique, or any of its external characteristics, but are swayed perforce by the power of the music. That is the greatest technical proficiency, which does not appear, nor attract attention to itself as technical proficiency. That is the highest art which no longer appears to be art. Goethe says, "When art becomes Nature, then it is art indeed."

Now, the finest folk-songs are characterized by that perfection and inevitable quality which we perceive and feel in Nature's creations. Owing to their secret and mysterious growth, their floating through so many human minds, and being unconsciously moulded and perfected in the course of their romantic journey, they can be called more or less products of Nature. They are the wild flowers of music. And it is this perfection of expression which they ultimately attain, coupled with the deep and fundamental nature of the emotions expressed, which gives to them their heart-moving power and intimate appeal.

Great, indeed, are the temptations of the intellect. Because we can do a thing there is an ever-present restless urge to do it. For what are these wonderful and complicated technical proficiencies, which we have developed in ourselves, if not for use! So we must perforce write a symphony or other pretentious work of large dimensions, if only to show that we are able to do it. But many of us find that having provided ourselves with great toil and trouble (and it *is* toil) with these keen and costly mental tools, we have nothing to use them on but themselves. Some of us are in the position of the young man who bought a fine roll top desk, provided it with a complete and varied equipment of paper, ink, gold pens, ornate penwipers, etc., and sat himself down to write a great work. He then made a most embarrassing discovery. He had nothing to say. Of this primal need he had not thought before. Of course, as he had the equipment, the only thing he could do was to take some paper and cover it with insignificant balderdash. Now, this is just the predicament of many musical



composers, and that is the reason why, of all the music written, so little of it lives. The folk-song on the other hand, has something real to say. It expresses a true feeling and answers a need for the expression of this feeling. It could almost be described as a heart throb set to music. Expressing emotion as it does, it tells of something of more fundamental interest to humanity than the contrivances of the intellect, no matter how wonderful and complicated the latter may be. Hence, its long life.

It must again be understood that the ultimate life, or preservation of a musical composition does not depend upon the *cognoscenti* so much as it does upon the people. In almost any line of human endeavor the greatest opposition to progress comes from the experts in that line; the learned men, the academicians, or in other words, the conservers of the traditions respecting that particular line of human endeavor. The reason for this is psychological, and the explanation of this fact involves a short disquisition on the natural history of the human mind.

Our minds can only progress in learning or development through the acquisition of new ideas. Now, when a new idea is apprehended by the mind, the idea reacts upon the mind in two decidedly different ways. Firstly, its acquisition tends to strengthen and to develop; inasmuch as it opens new horizons of thought. It broadens and extends our mental outlook, and as long as we retain the new idea we shall not slip back into the intellectual narrowness in which we dwelt before its acquisition. On the other hand, the hard and fast retention of an idea will eventually exert such a dominative and restrictive influence on the mind as to interfere with its power of grasping other new ideas. Mental development may be likened to ascending a ladder, the rungs of which stand for different planes of consciousness. The rung on which we are standing certainly holds us at a certain height. But in order to ascend yet higher, we must place one foot on the next higher rung and draw the other up to it. We now stand at a higher level. But in the process of attaining this higher level we have left the rung on which we formerly stood. It is thus in mental development. Progress involves sacrifice. Many ideas which we formerly held have to be given up to make room for newer and larger ideas. And this sacrifice becomes harder and harder for us to make as we grow older.

Youth is the great time for acquiring new ideas. Our minds are then pliant and receptive. Our mental life moves and progresses at a very rapid rate. New ideas are being constantly grasped, and no idea is retained in undisputed possession of our

minds long enough to exert its secondary or baneful influence, *i. e.*, that of restricting further development. But after youth there comes a period of conservation. The acquisition of new ideas becomes less and less frequent. Those ideas which we have already acquired, being left more and more in undisturbed possession, finally take root and grow into the very structure of our minds themselves. As we grow older our minds naturally become less flexible and less able to acquire new ideas anyway, and the power and dominion of the ideas which we already possess continually increases. This process usually ends by certain ideas possessing us rather than our holding them. When the process is complete it then becomes impossible for us to progress or to develop any further.

Now the experts, who are especially trained in any particular line of human activity—as music, for instance—are those who know the most about it; those whose minds contain the greatest number of ideas relative to it, and who, owing to all their knowledge are most sensitive to any change from the traditional form of that activity. The majority of them are therefore peculiarly liable to be attacked by those prejudices which, while helping to maintain certain standards of excellence, are inimical to progress.

The people, on the other hand, not having this special knowledge, are free from the prejudice engendered by it. Its judgment, therefore, operating as it does through the long course of time, is saner and juster than that of the expert of any given period. In speaking of the “people” I do not refer to *hoi polloi*, but to that body of cultured persons who follow with interest the developments in any kind of human activity. In music the “people” means the audience. That “body” consists usually of persons of both good sense and refined sensitiveness, but who do not have a sufficiency of special knowledge to render them liable to become victims of the prejudices which attack the expert. Of course, public valuation of a new thing is liable to many errors; many mistakes, and even many false judgments. The great but inexpert mind of the people is particularly prone to fall into those errors of judgment which the expert skilfully avoids. But give it time and its final verdict is far more balanced, sane, and true than that of the prejudiced expert.

The great thing to be desired is an “expert” with an “open mind”; *i. e.*, a person who knows his subject thoroughly and who has managed to steer clear of prejudice. A certain number of these persons are always in existence. Without them progress

would be well-nigh impossible. For they act as guides or steersmen to the rest of humanity, keeping the boat headed toward that which they feel to be good.

It has frequently been said that the human heart is greater than the human intellect. That is to say, emotions such as love, in all its various forms (as the love of man and woman, mother love, love of race, of country, friendship, altruism, etc.), courage, fear, hate, joy, and sorrow are more fundamental than reason and the transformations and inventions of the intellect. Who can doubt this? The lives of all primitive peoples, as the South Sea Islanders, or the North American Indians, afford a constant spectacle of human existence which is well-nigh devoid of intellectual development and yet is full to the brim of the fundamental emotions. Even among civilized peoples, the intellectual status of the mass never rises very high, and these fundamental emotions are the very stuff of which the lives of the vast majority are composed. And among the most highly intellectually developed individuals of a people, emotions of various kinds are their ruling powers. This is easily seen when anything in the nature of a crisis arises in their lives. Let the wife or child of one of these individuals be threatened with sickness or death, and the fundamental emotion of love at once asserts itself. Intellectual subtleties and interests are forgotten for the nonce and the intellect assumes its true place in the natural scheme of things as the "helper," the "tool"; in fact, the most powerful organ of man, but not the fundamental "man" himself. Their relationship to the race becomes at once manifest and they are for the time being one of the people, swayed by the same fundamental emotions as are all. Even Schopenhauer, amid all his metaphysical subtleties, declares that "the brain is not the finest part of man." Emerson, as is well-known, is continually asserting the dependence of the intellect on the spirit. He says in one of his essays: "The blindness of the intellect begins when it would be something of itself," and does not St. Paul say, "The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life"?

All these things being taken into consideration, it would seem that in the art of music those compositions which were inspired by, and which faithfully express emotion of various kinds stand a better chance of being cherished and loved by the people than those compositions in which the interest aroused is of a purely intellectual order; which are in many cases masterpieces of technique, but which, after all is said, spring from and are elaborations of "thought" rather than expressions of "feeling."

Hence, it naturally follows that the compositions first mentioned stand a better chance of living, or of being preserved.

Since the invention of the art of printing, it has become possible to preserve, or to make a pretense of preserving, numerous compositions of purely intellectual interest. But as far as the "people" are concerned, most of them are quite dead, and have long since ceased to be of any vital interest to us. They are interesting and their preservation is important from an historical point of view, in order that special students may see and realize how the art has grown and developed, but most of them have no vital interest of themselves. Whenever a piece of ancient music has survived, it has done so because it expressed a compelling emotion and was in that particular superior to the technical artificialities (invented by the intellect) of the time in which it was written. Händel's "Largo," which was written about 165 years ago, is today as alive as it ever was. It is expressive of a high and noble emotion and it is an illuminative and instructive thing to observe the hearty response of the "people" when it is played at a popular concert. Technically, however, it is far less complicated and intellectually interesting than many another contemporaneous composition which has long since been consigned to a deserved oblivion.

For it is the spirit of the people, as before mentioned, and not that of the scholars which decides what shall live and what shall die. The Scholiasts have at all times in the history of the art told us that all the fine and beautiful things which the far-seeing souls of great creative artists were revealing to us were bad, decadent, dangerous, and threatened the very existence of art itself. But it has been useless for them to warn us against that which was great, beautiful, or expressive simply because (on account of its newness) it failed to agree in certain externals with the then existent art. The "people" knew better, and despite the bitter warnings of the scholiasts have preserved to us these wonderful and emotionally expressive works. Meanwhile a fate which is sardonically humorous in its operation has consigned these very scholiasts themselves to that oblivion to which they desired to consign the sons of light.

I hope that it may not be deduced from the above considerations that I undervalue the intellect and its immense service in all departments of human activity. Lest the reader get such an idea, let me assert that I consider the intellect to be the greatest engine of expression of the human spirit. But it is *not* the human spirit; it is a tool. It should be a servant of the spirit,

obeying the desires and behests of its master with ever greater perfection, but never assuming to be the master itself. If this clever servant should usurp the position of master, building complexity upon complexity without the informing light of the spirit, no matter how dazzling and quasi-impressive the structure, it will lack the soul of life; the sun of inspiration will have set; and a vain thing will have come to pass. And this is what continually occurs in music. How many compositions we can all recall, of which the technical construction is not only flawless and quite beyond criticism, even rousing our wonder and admiration at the marvelous complexity and ingenuity displayed, but which nevertheless leave us cold when we hear them. They appeal to our heads rather than to our hearts. They have no particular emotional message for us, and hence, I believe, are destined for a short life. This emotional content, which I claim to be absolutely necessary to the continued life of a composition, may be of a light and charming kind, as in Schubert's song, "Hark, Hark the Lark," or of a more noble and spiritual nature, as in the Andante from Beethoven's Fifth Symphony. Both of these compositions have lasted quite a while already, while many another, which was planned on a more intellectually ambitious scale, has fallen by the wayside. How many a composition one hears which does not give the impression that it *had to be written*, but that it was written by some one who had the technique and felt bound to do something because he was able to. It is as if one walked round the block for exercise. But walking round the block does not get one anywhere except to the place from which he started. And in regard to these compositions, they are not real music, but merely technical exercises whose only value is to keep the composer's mental muscles in training. A short time ago I attended a symphony concert at which one of those still-born compositions was played. There was the usual perfunctory applause with no heart in it. Directly afterward a composition from the same period was played which aroused the audience to enthusiasm, and two ladies sitting behind me exclaimed: "Ah! *he* has something to *say*." It was a comment much to the point on what I am writing about.

Now, in the gradual growth and expansion of the art of music during the last thousand years, it has frequently been a temptation not to be resisted—and to which many schools have in turn succumbed—to make of music a purely intellectual cult, interesting to scholars only, and having little concern or interest for the people. From this dry, barren and remote intellectualism it has always been rescued by the timely arrival of the "great"

composer. He has restored the balance in his works of intellectual development and fundamental emotion. While making use of the ingenious technical elaborations of his predecessors, he has yet infused into his work a compelling and powerful human feeling. This feeling dominates, and one realizes that the technical or intellectual side of his work is but the vehicle for that which is greater than itself. Intellectualism is no longer its own excuse for being, but assumes once more its proper relation to the spirit. Such periods are illustrated by the early artificialities of the English school, culminating in Purcell; the amazing ingenuity of the Netherlands contrapuntists, followed by the appearance of Orlando di Lasso; and the halting, dry, and uninspired music of the early church which was of a sudden quickened and vitalized by the appearance of Palestrina. All things considered, it would seem that music which is inspired by and which strongly reflects or expresses human feeling, is destined to live, whereas music in which the preponderating interest is an intellectual one, no matter how interesting it is, is destined to die. It is said that "Music is the language of emotion." This is such a trite and banal saying that it is in some disrepute. It is nevertheless *true*, and woe to the composer who forgets it.

In a word, that which makes music live is not so much its *art* quality as its *heart* quality.



## THE "OTHELLO" OF VERDI AND SHAKESPEARE

By EDGAR ISTELE

SHAKESPEARE'S dramas—in Goethe's words "a wonderful peep-show, wherein the history of the world runs its course before our eyes on the invisible thread of time"—have always fired the imagination of musicians and tempted them to undertake their musical refashionment. Ignoring Lessing's trenchant dictum: "Shakespeare should be studied—not despoiled," the mob of composers, mostly in the train of librettists of questionable type, pounced on Shakespeare's remains to glut themselves with this apparently ownerless store. But the great Briton's mighty spirit most often triumphed over this rapacious crew, and his lofty creations lived on undimmed in splendor, while the majority of the Shakespeare operas were speedily consigned to oblivion.

In all likelihood, Shakespeare's Tragedy of Jealousy was written in the year 1603, played before the King on Nov. 1, 1604, and not printed until the year 1622, after the poet's decease. Whereas a great part of the other Shakespearean pieces soon fell a prey to opera-fanciers, being plundered to furnish the framework for libretti, "Othello," strange to say, waited two hundred years before finding its first composer in Rossini, whose three-act opera, on a book written by Berio, had its première at Naples on Dec. 4, 1816. Considering the very exceptional dramaturgical difficulties presented by the remoulding of the Othello tragedy into an opera-book, it should occasion no surprise that Rossini's easy-going librettist treated Shakespeare with such scant ceremony as to copy only his last act, otherwise relying on his own free invention—probably the most sensible course, after all. And it was only in this last act, imitated from Shakespeare, that Rossini intensified his music to profounder expression and succeeded in obtaining some really impressive effects. The librettist had but one single poetical conceit; in the last act he makes a gondolier sing, beneath Desdemona's window, the well-known verse by Dante:

Nessun maggior dolore  
Che ricordarsi del tempo felice  
Nella miseria.

(There is no greater pain than to remember bygone happiness in deeps of woe.)

It was characteristic of the spirit of the time that the Neapolitan public viewed the murder of Desdemona with disfavor, insisting, from the second performance onward, on a "happy ending." So Desdemona protests her innocence, Othello is touched, and the pair sing Rossini's cheerful love-duet (adapted from *Armida*), "Cara per quest' anima"! Even Hanslick, as he tells us in his "Musikalisches Skizzenbuch," still heard Rossini's *Othello* thus performed.

When this opera first appeared, there was living in the little Lombard town of Busseto a three-year-old boy for whom it was reserved by fate to give the *Othello* drama its definitive musical form—Giuseppe Verdi. But, strangely enough, not until his seventieth year, that very year 1883 which saw the death of his great coeval and rival, Richard Wagner, did Verdi address himself to the composition of the formidable subject. The aged Master no longer refused to recognize the conception—most cogently formulated by Wagner—that the poem should, in many respects, decide the form of the music; hence, in his later works (beginning with *Aida*), he wrought with libretti of a stamp quite different from those he had hitherto composed. The time was fulfilled; dramatic music had learned to care for its own without operatic affectations; Verdi, having reached maturity, envisaged new possibilities in style;—just then, while perusing Shakespeare, whom he revered the more with increasing familiarity, he happened on "*Othello*," and forthwith resolved to mould the drama to his will.

The fundamental difference between Shakespeare's stage and that of our time was the lack of a curtain shutting off the stage in front from the audience, and the absence of changing scenery. There was only one immovable scene, built up architecturally, for the background. The stage projected so far into the parquet (pit) that the audience could survey it from three sides. The sole curtain was placed in the background, where it was used as a drop before a recess which served special purposes. Furthermore, above this recess in the background there was a kind of box which could be utilized for a window, a balcony, the top of a tower, and the like. Any change of scene could thus be readily indicated by the raising or lowering of curtains, while the front of the stage towards the pit remained open and unchanged throughout. In very particular cases—for instance, when the scene was laid in a foreign country—a placard bearing the name of the place was hung up in the background. A knowledge of this stage-arrangement is essential to a comprehension of Shakespeare's stage-technics.

Thus, in Shakespeare's technics, there is something that reminds us of the modern cinematograph (this is not meant, in the least, to compare the great Briton's immortal art with this adventitious modern toy), but only in so far as it enables him to divide up his drama into an extended series of short scenes which are interjected into the main narrative in strict chronological order without heed for change of place. On the other hand, we now require fewer scenes, a closer compression of the action, the rejection of all superfluous details; and these requirements should be still stricter for the opera-book than for the spoken drama.

When we examine the structure of Shakespeare's tragedy, it becomes evident, for various reasons, why Boito originally proposed to call his opera "Iago"; for the course of the drama is such that the nominal hero, Othello, does not assume the leading rôle until the second half, the "rival," Iago, having held it theretofore. Indeed, the action might be so analyzed as to show Othello merely as the object of Iago's guileful intrigues, the synopsis then being

1. Iago resolves to make Othello jealous.
2. Preparation and execution of this plan.
3. Climax of success.
4. Growing danger for Iago, despite apparent progress.
5. Catastrophe.

Nevertheless, it must be borne in mind that our deeper sympathies are far more strongly enlisted for Othello throughout than for Iago, so that the tragedy must of right bear the title "Othello," the more, because Iago, thinking to play the part of Destiny, is ever further enmeshed in her toils.

Yet more important than the above is the question concerning the exposition of "Othello." Shakespeare has frequently been reproached with having, in this case, deferred entering upon the principal theme of the piece until the middle. To the contrary it has been urged that Shakespeare's chief concern was to stave off a too early introduction of what his commentators hold to be most important. Half his task was accomplished only after he had shown how a man of Othello's type could be accessible to Iago's insinuations. Iago, for his part, must not be overhasty, otherwise he runs the risk of leaving Othello unmoved by the first assault. Then the latter's suspicion might easily have been directed at Iago himself, instead of Desdemona and Cassio, and the entire plan thus nipped in the bud. Consequently, everything depended on insuring the effect of the very first suggestions, and

to this end Shakespeare could not be sparing of time or space. So it comes that the first act forms, as it were, a complete whole in itself, something nearly midway between an ordinary first act and a prologue. Otto Ludwig, in his "Shakespeare-Studien," rightly observes that, although the entire first act might easily have been united into one single scene (for all that had to be recited was the Exposition, with little dialogue), Shakespeare was obliged to make three scenes out of one, in pursuance of his aim to present his characters true to life, and clearly to motivate everything—past, present, and future.

All this applies, be it noted, only to the *spoken* drama. And now the question arises, Ought the *opera* to show similar complexities? The sole possible answer is, No. The simpler the preliminaries, the briefer the Exposition, the more valuable becomes the subject for musical expression. Moreover, Shakespeare's work has five acts, not one of which can be spared except the first; now, if this introductory matter can really be lopped off, we must—in view of our modern susceptibilities, which find the five-act opera more and more unbearable—consider the omission of this act to be an imperative necessity, provided that the essential points in the Exposition can be successfully extracted therefrom and organically incorporated with the following acts. To achieve this was a dramaturgical feat of the highest rank; Boito, however, actually performed it. One day he told Hanslick that he had "racked his brains, and Verdi's, to find how this first act of Shakespeare's could be saved without making the opera too long." It cannot have escaped his notice that the first act affords various favorable situations for the composer; although in this very act the unity of place, elsewhere preserved by Boito in so masterly a manner, could not have been maintained. But finally the consideration was decisive, that just from the standpoint of an opera-book the detailing of these subtle motives was superfluous for the following action. Hanslick goes on to remark: "With the exception of this cut, Boito departed from Shakespeare's tragedy only in the omission of the two characters Brabantio and Bianca, and in making a few modest lyrical additions; in the progress of the opera, scene follows scene almost as in the drama." This is an egregious mistake, which does Boito's merit a grievous wrong. Careful comparison will prove that, while Boito's *words* are mostly those of Shakespeare, the *architecture* of the book was fundamentally altered by him, so that each act is coherent as regards place, and each important scene takes its course unhindered.

By omitting the first act the Count, Brabantio, Gratiano, and two Senators, were suppressed. In Shakespeare's play only one of these, Gratiano, reappeared later; him Boito sagaciously combined with Lodovico (who plays an important rôle in Shakespeare as the envoy of Venice), which could be done the more easily because both are relatives of Desdemona. Furthermore, both the Clown (already omitted by Schiller in his arrangement of "Othello") and the equally superfluous Bianca were discarded; though the latter, in Boito's version, is twice mentioned by Iago to Cassio—in fact, in the eavesdropping scene it was *necessary* to mention her. For the rest, Boito made it easy to dispose of Bianca by letting Othello see the fatal handkerchief in Cassio's own hands—a much more effective touch—and likewise leaving out the fight in the dark. So Boito tells us nothing at all about matters antecedent to Othello's marriage and the opposition of the family (which was already noted in the novel), except that Desdemona loved Othello "for the dangers he had passed," and he loved her because of her pity. The "blame" which Desdemona takes upon herself with respect to her father, and which then plays a part among Iago's arguments, is also discarded. In Boito's version Desdemona appears yet more immaculate than in Shakespeare's; she is turned into a real angel, to whom is opposed, in Iago, the devil incarnate, not merely a fiendish man. Boito therefore lets Iago escape unwounded, and forgoes Shakespeare's rather cheap retribution. Otherwise the characters of the tragedy remain unaltered, with the exception of Emilia, who gains in nobility. She does not steal the handkerchief, but simply picks it up in the presence of Desdemona and Othello, who do not notice the action, and—as in Shakespeare—it is forcibly taken from her by Iago, who intimidates her.

Sonnenthal has made the pertinent observation that he had always missed, in Shakespeare's tragedy, a tender dialogue between Othello and Desdemona which would have furnished both a pleasing contrast to the following scenes of jealousy and a deeper motivation. In Shakespeare, Othello expresses his love for Desdemona merely in detached sentences. (These latter, by the way, were very skillfully pieced together by Boito; taking some, as remarked before, from the first act, and others from the scene of greeting in Act II, which is without all intimacy in Shakespeare, even Iago being present.) We see Othello alone with Desdemona only as her torturer and murderer. In the opera, on the contrary, the love-duet forms a fine and well-founded finale to the first act; its closing phrase, so moving in effect,

becomes doubly touching and impressive on its repetition at Desdemona's deathbed. Holding each other closely embraced, Othello and Desdemona go towards the castle; "Venus shall guide us," sings Othello with artful double-meaning, for 'tis late at night, and the Pleiades are sinking in the ocean. The powers of darkness have indeed begun their spinning of the hidden thread, but they have not as yet succeeded in really disturbing Othello's and Desdemona's peace; only the quiet of night has been interrupted, not the feast of love about to begin. And so this first act ends in pure, sweet harmony. And still there quivers in Othello's words—borrowed from Shakespeare—that tell of joy overfull, a secret dread of a menacing, inexorable destiny.

In contrast to Shakespeare, who gives Iago a long time for preparation, so that he *intentionally* brings Othello in at the given instant, Boito lets Othello enter *by chance* in the momentous third scene in the second act; but Iago slyly turns this chance to profit when, apparently without intention (he was well aware of Othello's approach), he says, "Ha! I like not that." Here the effect is all the stronger because Othello is bound to believe that Iago cannot have seen him (in Shakespeare, Iago and Othello enter together, so that Iago's ejaculation is not quite so effective). What follows is evolved from Shakespeare, but with important alterations; in Shakespeare the dialogue between Iago and Othello is interrupted, when hardly under way, by Desdemona, who meantime has taken leave of Cassio; Boito lets Desdemona and Cassio remain in the garden, watched by Othello; and the discussion between Othello and Iago which, in Shakespeare, follows Desdemona's exit, is directly linked with the beginning. (Taken almost literally from Shakespeare, but abbreviated here and there.) Something new first appears in the passage where Othello demands proofs. Here Boito introduces a splendid bit of invention, very welcome to the musician; through the wide opening in the background we see Desdemona reappear in the garden, surrounded by women, children, and seafarers, who tender her flowers and other gifts. Some accompany the singing of the chorus on mandolins, others on small harps. This charming picture, and the affecting strains, disarm Othello: "Sweet songs, I thank you! To my heart ye bring its wonted peace again." But Iago opines: "However love with loveliness may thrive, to bring a discord in I'll soon contrive." (In Shakespeare, Iago says something similar in another place—Act II, Scene 1—when viewing the mutual tenderness of Othello and Desdemona.) When the song of the chorus ends, Desdemona kisses some of the children on



their foreheads, and the women kiss the hem of her dress. To the sailors she hands a purse. The chorus go out. Accompanied by Emilia, Desdemona enters the hall and approaches Othello. And only now does she proffer her request for Cassio, which Shakespeare lets her bring forward much earlier. In this case, again, two highly important scenes are fused, namely, that first episode in which Othello roughly refuses to pardon Cassio, and the incident of the handkerchief, which Shakespeare brings in later. This fusion effects an admirable intensification. Othello grows more and more heated over Desdemona's persistent entreaties, until she finally asks him why he is so harsh to-day, and he replies, "My forehead burns." And here the opportunity offers for losing the handkerchief. Better than in Shakespeare (where the handkerchief is too small), Othello throws it unceremoniously to the ground. What now follows is excellently planned, not only dramatically, but also from a musical standpoint; a quartet develops, which presents Verdi with an occasion for the sharpest characterization of the four personages. Otto Ludwig had already called attention to Shakespeare's "polyphonic dialogue":

In scenes of this character the genuine dramatic life pulses most strongly in such polyphonic passages, where different voices in different rhythms, each one with continuing individuality, meet and cut athwart each other. But the number of voices thus interwoven must not be so increased as to render them indistinguishable.

Boito and Verdi, in this case, have made a magnificent musical transcription of such a "polyphonic dialogue." Desdemona sues for love; Othello voices his doubts in an aside (as in the Shakespeare monologue of Act II, Scene 3); meanwhile, Iago is engaged in a dispute with Emilia, who is unwilling to give up the handkerchief because of her forebodings, and from whom Iago finally snatches it. He commands her to say nothing about it, and she, intimidated by the scoundrel's interdiction, dares not resist. (Thus Emilia's character gains in nobility in contrast with Shakespeare's treatment.

Contrariwise, Boito is less happy in the eighth scene of Act III. In part, this great ensemble-scene is freely invented by Boito, and in part formed by employing episodes from Shakespeare's Act IV, Scene 2 (Othello and Desdemona; Iago, Roderigo). Its beginning is inspired by the last words of Othello in Shakespeare, IV, 1.

To Roderigo's vexation and Iago's consternation Othello tells them that Cassio, by order of the Doge, is to replace him

as governor. Cassio simply bows, and Othello takes this to be an admission that he is ill-pleased. Now Othello (who throughout his official discourse has been throwing furious asides at the weeping Desdemona) announces that he will set forth on the morrow with Lodovico and Desdemona. There ensues a fearful outburst; Othello hurls to the ground the parchment, which before he had kissed, and lays hold of Desdemona so violently that she sinks down; she is compassionately supported by Lodovico and Emilia. Moving plaint of Desdemona, who laments the destruction of her love-dream. Now comes the grand ensemble, of which Kalbeck writes:

Rushing from every quarter of the globe, events and personages now dash one against the other. Othello has received his recall to Venice and, in his rage over Cassio's succession to his post and Desdemona's supposed disloyalty, has thrown his wife to the ground before the eyes of all. A polyphonic musical number of most imposing intention and broad design seeks to relieve the painful tension and give expression to the emotions of all present. Roderigo bewails the imminent departure of Desdemona; Emilia admires her mistress's greatness of soul, and the latter weeps tears of blood over the blighted springtide of her love; Cassio views the sudden turn of fortune with fearful misgivings; Lodovico, the Venetian envoy, voices his indignant astonishment at the—for him—inexplicable occurrence; the Chorus contributes sympathetic reflections, now denouncing Othello, now bemoaning Desdemona. Nor is this all; the scoundrelly Iago, after having confirmed the Moor in his murderous decision, hatches yet another intrigue with Roderigo, aiming at Cassio's downfall:—and all this wails and moans and weeps and reflects and fumes and deliberates and intrigues at cross purposes, so that the auditor, driven into a corner and vainly trying to get his bearings in the three-column libretto, is literally bereft of sight and hearing. In the score the ten several staves for the singers make a brave showing, and the aspect of the voice-parts, alternating with and supplementing each other, and criss-crossing like a lively swarm of bees, rejoices the eye; but when they start a-going—good heavens! The full rehearsal disclosed the ominous ineffectiveness of this ensemble, although it had been rehearsed with the utmost exactitude and went off without a hitch; and so it came that this grandiose number, which Verdi evidently surveys with the pride of a chieftain reviewing a gathering of the clans, was cut down to one-eighth by the homicidal red-pencil of the director.

This is assuredly somewhat exaggerated, although we must agree with Kalbeck's pronouncements in various respects. In particular, it strikes me as quite impossible that anybody who had not carefully studied the libretto could understand, during the performance, a single word of the intrigue just set on foot by Iago, who is urging Roderigo to murder Cassio. But for this

reason the listener will totally miss an essential point in the last act. This drawback should not be underestimated; once conceded that the book ought to be constructed as a *drama*, it follows that *every* important point in this drama should be intelligible; but this is rendered nugatory by the entangling of a principal intrigue in the uproar of a great ensemble. It is perfectly understood that Boito did not wish to sacrifice a special scene to the conspiracy between Iago and Roderigo, and therefore made up his mind to include the affair in the ensemble. But it happens that Roderigo, whom Boito—in contrast with Shakespeare—sketches very incompletely anyhow, does not appear again at all. Considering that Boito had already taken so many liberties with Shakespeare, it might have been better to omit this entire side-plot, offering no explanation whatever of Iago's design to assassinate Cassio. It would have sufficed to learn, in the last act, that a plan to make away with Cassio had failed. Furthermore, it would have rendered Boito's text far more effective to let Roderigo himself come on in the last act with a remorseful accusation of Iago in the presence of the murdered Desdemona; then there might have been introduced—as Iago's final deed of infamy—an attempt to kill Roderigo instead of the stabbing of Emilia. I do not proffer this sketch by way of improving on the poet, but simply for the reason that, because Shakespeare's involved dénouement is not suitable for the opera-book, the otherwise so skillful Boito has seemingly gone astray in this case (the treatment of Roderigo). Boito's miscalculation (already censured by Kalbeck) could, in fact, be rectified only by leaving out Iago's fresh intrigue and bringing on Roderigo again in the last act. Moreover, the murder of the penitent Roderigo before our eyes would be decidedly more effective than his stabbing behind the scenes, as Boito prefers. (In Shakespeare, too, Roderigo is made to fall in plain sight, but on the street.) After all, the taking-off of Roderigo was really not absolutely essential; so I can understand why Boito prefers the exhibition of the corpses of Othello and Desdemona only, at the close, and not such a heap of dead bodies as Shakespeare fancies.—The scene comes to a true operatic ending; Othello, in a paroxysm of fury, commands all onlookers to depart; exeunt omnes "horrorstricken," after Iago has told them how a strange seizure has bereft Othello of his senses. And at Desdemona, too, Othello launches frightful maledictions.

The following short scene finds its prototype in Shakespeare, Act IV, Scene 1, where Othello also sinks swooning after raging furiously, while from without the trumpets of victory sound forth

his fame and the people do him homage. Highly sensational, but by no means ill-devised, is the grandiose finale. Iago sets his heel on the neck of the unconscious Othello, and shouts with triumphant disdain at the distant crowds who are acclaiming the "Lion of Venice," "Here lies the Lion!" An act-ending whose thrill none can escape.

The fourth act is a masterpiece of Boito's and Verdi's—one of the finest acts to be found in the opera-literature of all times and nations. No small share of the credit belongs to the poet, who discarded everything which could interfere in any manner with the dominant tone of the act. Herein is clearly displayed the difference between Shakespeare and modern technics. Shakespeare closes his fourth act with an episode between Desdemona and Emilia (preceded by an entirely superfluous appearance of Othello and Lodovico in the selfsame apartment!); said episode ends with Desdemona's farewell to Emilia. Now, at the outset of his fifth act, Shakespeare inserts a long scene embracing the entrances of all sorts of characters, which leads up to the murder of Roderigo and threatens complete distraction of our attention from Desdemona's fate. Only with the beginning of the second scene in Act V does the poet introduce us into Desdemona's chamber. Boito, with a bold stroke of the pen, strikes out the whole nightly riot-scene, and unites the dismissal of Emilia directly with Othello's appearance in Desdemona's apartment. Thus the fourth act of the opera displays a wonderful symmetry and unity which are still further intensified by the ditty of the willow (as given in Shakespeare).

In the third scene the deviation of the musical drama from the spoken play is most sharply manifested. The English poet needs must put a lengthy monologue in Othello's mouth for the justification of his murderous intent; the musician makes him keep silence, while the orchestra speaks alone. It is clear that this silent Othello, giving vent to his feelings by pantomime only, will affect us much more deeply than one declaiming sophisms to us—and himself.

In the opera, Othello enters through a secret door, which renders his appearance the more gruesome. He lays a sabre on the table, hesitates a moment whether to extinguish the light or no, catches sight of Desdemona, puts out the light, makes a furious gesture, approaches the bed, and remains standing. Finally he raises the curtain, gazes long on the sleeping Desdemona, then kisses her thrice. She awakes. The dialogue ensuing is almost exactly as in Shakespeare, up to the murder.

What now follows is greatly abbreviated, containing only the necessary exchange of words; otherwise as in Shakespeare. Desdemona dies. Emilia's disclosure and her cry for help are held within narrowest bounds.

Emilia calls Iago to account. On penetrating his villainy she discloses everything (the menacing of Emilia with the sword, and her murder, are elided). The following scene is much condensed; Cassio says at once that he found the handkerchief in his house; Montano (in lieu of Lodovico) testifies that the dying Roderigo revealed Iago's plots to him (not, as in Shakespeare, a letter); Iago escapes, but is pursued; his fate is left uncertain, whereas in Shakespeare he is wounded by Othello and then seized and brought forward, with a prospect of ensuing torture. Not until then does Othello grasp at his sword, which Lodovico tries to wrench from him. But he lets the sword sink; any boy could take it away from him. "Here is my journey's end! Oh honor! Othello is no more." And here follows, in place of Shakespeare's long-breathed glorification of his services to the state, an admirable song of farewell to Desdemona, whose purity he now recognizes. Unnoticed he draws the dagger from his cloak, and stabs himself with the words, "I'll follow thee." Shakespeare's noble farewell lines form the close:

I kiss'd thee ere I kill'd thee;—no way but this,  
Killing myself, to die upon a kiss.

Or, as Boito has it:

Pria d'uccirti, sposa, ti baciai.  
Or morendo sull' ombra in cui mi giaccio,  
un bacio, un bacio ancora ah! un altro bacio!

Verdi's immortal strains recall the kisses of the first night of love. All present, profoundly moved, listen in silence; for

All, that's spoke, is marr'd.

Thus ends the fourth act, probably the best of the whole opera, both musically and dramatically; the highest manifestation therein of Boito's mastership and Verdi's genius. The fact has been unanimously acknowledged, that Boito's book is a model of the best type; for myself, I consider it the best written since Richard Wagner's death, and the only one which, based throughout on Wagner's principles, does not really depart from

them for a moment. Kalbeck, its translator, calls it "one of the most admirable opera-books that we possess," and his colleague Hanslick wrote: "Boito, in his version of *Othello*, shows himself possessed of fine literary instinct and expert knowledge both of the stage and of music; his verse is fraught with virile euphony." On the other hand, Hanslick characterizes the choice of *Othello* for an opera-libretto as a not particularly happy one—and even as not to his liking—because, of all the passions, that of jealousy is the least musical; but we may well consider this bit of æsthetic professorial wisdom confuted by Verdi's achievement.

It seems to me that Monaldi hits the mark squarely in his Verdi biography, when he says:

The libretto of *Othello* cannot be classified with the semi-literary tribe of earlier opera-texts, which were, at bottom, merely a spring-board for the musician;—as Wagner remarked, the field on which he could deploy his genius to full activity. Boito's *Othello* is a feat in which the poet participates as a genuine collaborator in the musician's work of art. It is dramatic composition, thought out and written down so that from letter to letter it might remain in closest contact with the music and poetically blend therewith.

And now, enough!—or 'twould seem that old Verdi was in the right when he humorously exclaimed, "Oh i tedeschi! i tedeschi! Per ogni zampa di pulce o di mosca un volume di trecento pagine!" (Oh, the Germans! the Germans! For every leg of a fly or a gnat a volume of three hundred pages!)<sup>1</sup>

(Translated by Theodore Baker)

<sup>1</sup>In 1913 the excellent magazine "Die Musik" (Berlin) published a series of articles by Dr. Istel on "Verdi and Shakespeare". The present is an English version of one of these articles as revised for The Musical Quarterly by the author.—Ed.



## SHALL WE REALIZE WAGNER'S IDEALS? \*

By CARL VAN VECHTEN

**H**ISTORIANS of operatic phenomena have observed that fashions in music change; the popular Donizetti and Bellini of one century are only suffered to exist during the next for the sake of the opportunity they afford to some brilliant songstress. New tastes arise, new styles in music. Dukas' generally unrelished (and occasionally highly appreciated) *Ariane et Barbe-Bleue* may not be powerful enough to establish a place for itself in the *répertoire*, but its direct influence on composers and its indirect influence on auditors make this lyric drama highly important as an indication of the future of opera as a fine art. Moussorgsky's *Boris Godunow*, first given in this country some forty years after its production in Russia, is another matter. That score contains a real thrill in itself, a thrill which when felt makes it just a little difficult to feel the intensity of a Wagner drama again: because Wagner is becoming just a little bit old-fashioned. *Lohengrin* and *Tannhäuser* are becoming a little shop-worn. They do not glitter with the glory of a *Don Giovanni* or the invincible splendor of an *Armide*. There are parts of *Die Walküre* which are growing old. Now Wagner, in many ways the greatest figure as opera composer which the world has yet produced, could hold his place in the singing theatres for many decades to come if some proper effort were made to do justice to his dramas, the justice which in a large measure has been done to his music. This effort at present is not being made.

In the Metropolitan Opera House season of 1895-6 when Jean de Reszke first sang Tristan in German the opportunity seemed to be opened for further breaks with what a Munich critic once dubbed "Die Bayreuther Tradition oder Der mis-verstandene Wagner." For up to that time, in spite of some isolated examples, it had come to be considered, in utter misunderstanding of Wagner's own wishes and doctrines, as a part of the technique of performing a Wagner music drama to shriek, howl, or bark the tones, rather than to sing them. There had

been, I have said, isolated examples of German singers, and artists of other nationalities singing in German, who had *sung* their phrases in these lyric plays, but the appearance in the Wagner rôles, in German, of a tenor whose previous appearances had been made largely in works in French and Italian which demanded the use of what is called *bel canto* (it only means, good singing) brought about a controversy which even yet is raging in some parts of the world. Should Wagner be sung, in the manner of Jean de Reszke, or shouted in the "traditional" manner? Was it possible to sing the music and make the effect the Master expected? In answer it may be said that never in their history have *Siegfried*, *Tristan und Isolde*, and *Lohengrin* met with such success as when Jean de Reszke and his famous associates appeared in them, and it may also be said that since that time there has been a consistent effort made on the part of the management of the Metropolitan Opera House (and other theatres as well) to provide artists for these dramas who could sing them, and sing them as Italian operas are sung, an effort to which opera directors have been spurred by a growing insistence on the part of the public.

It was the first break with the Bayreuth bugbear, tradition, and it might have been hoped that this tradition would have been stifled in other directions, with this successful precedent in mind, but such has not been the case. As a result of this failure to follow up a beneficial lead, in spite of orchestral performances which bring out the manifold beauties of the scores and single impersonations of high rank by eminent artists, we are beginning to see the Wagner dramas falling into decline, long before the appointed time, because their treatment has been held in the hands of Cosima Wagner, who—with the best of intentions, of course—not only insists (at Bayreuth she is mistress, and her influence on singers, conductors, stage directors, and scene painters throughout the world is very great) on the carrying out of Wagner's theories, as she understands them, and even when they are only worthy of being ignored, but who also (whether rightly or wrongly) is credited with a few traditions of her own. Wagner indeed invented a new form of drama but he did not have the time or means at his disposal to develop an adequate technique for its performance.

We are all familiar with the so-called "Bayreuth" version of Wotan in *Die Walküre* which makes of that tragic-father figure a boisterous silly old scold (so good an artist as Carl Braun, whose Hagen portrait is a masterpiece, has followed this tradition

literally); we all know too well the waking Brunnhilde who salutes the sun in the last act of *Siegfried* with gestures seemingly derived from the exercises of a Swedish *turnverein*, following the harp arpeggios as best she may; we remember how Wotan, seizing the sword from the dead Fasolt's hand, brandishes it to the tune of the sword *motiv*, indicating the coming of the hero, Siegfried, as the gods walk over the rainbow bridge to Walhalla at the end of *Das Rheingold*; we smile over the tame horse which some chorus man, looking the while like a truck driver who is not good to animals, holds for Brunnhilde while she sings her final lament in *Götterdämmerung*; we laugh aloud when he assists her to lead the unfiery steed, who walks as leisurely as a well-fed horse would towards oats, into the burning pyre; we can still see the picture of the three Rhine maidens, bobbing up and down jerkily behind a bit of gauze, reminiscent of visions of mermaids at the Eden Musée; we all have seen Tristan and Isolde, drunk with the love potion, swimming (there is no other word to describe this effect) towards each other; and no perfect Wagnerite can have forgotten the gods and the giants standing about in the fourth scene of *Das Rheingold* for all the world as if they were the protagonists of a fantastic minstrel show.

These are a few of the Bayreuth precepts which are followed. There are others. There are indeed many others. We all know the tendency of conductors who have been tried at Bayreuth, or who have come under the influence of Cosima Wagner, to drag the *tempi* to an exasperating degree. (Again the Master is held responsible for this tradition, but though all composers like to have their own music last in performance as long as possible, the tradition is just as authentic as the story that Richard Strauss, when conducting *Tristan und Isolde* at the Prinz-Regenten Theater in Munich, saved thirty minutes on the ordinary time it takes to perform the work in order to return as soon as possible to an interrupted game of Skat. However, I have heard performances of *Lohengrin* which were dragged by the conductor some thirty minutes beyond the ordinary time.)

But it is not tradition alone that is killing the Wagner dramas. In many instances and in most singing theatres silly traditions are aided in their work of destruction by another factor in hasty production. I am referring to the frequent liberties which have been taken with the intentions of the author. For, when expediency is concerned, no account is taken of tradition, and, curiously enough, expediency breaks with those traditions which can least stand being tampered with. The changes, in other

words, have not been made for the sake of improvement, but through carelessness, or to save time or money, or for some other cognate reason. An example of this sort of thing is the custom of giving the *Ring* dramas as a cycle in a period extending over four weeks, one drama a week. It is also customary at the Metropolitan Opera House in New York to entrust the rôle of Brunnhilde, or of Siegfried, to a different interpreter in each drama, so that the Brunnhilde who wakes in *Siegfried* is not at all the Brunnhilde who goes to sleep in *Die Walküre*. Then, although Brunnhilde exploits a horse in *Götterdämmerung*, she possesses none in *Die Walküre*; none of the other valkyries has a horse; Fricka's goats have been taken away from her and she walks to the mountain top, holding her skirts from under her feet for all the world as a lady of the fashionable world might as she ascended from a garden into a ballroom. At the Metropolitan Opera House, and at other theatres where I have seen the dramas, the decorations of the scenes of Brunnhilde's falling asleep and of her awakening are quite different.

Naturally ingenious explanations have been devised to fit these cases. For instance, one is told that animals are *never* at home on the stage. This explanation suffices perhaps for the animals which do not appear, but how about those which do? The vague phrase, "the exigencies of the *répertoire*," is mentioned as the reason for the extension of the cycle over several weeks, that and the further excuse that the system permits people from nearby towns to make weekly visits to the metropolis. Of course, Wagner intended that each of the *Ring* dramas should follow its predecessor on succeeding days in a festival week. If the *Ring* were so given in New York every season with due preparation, careful staging, and the best obtainable cast, the occasions would draw audiences from all over America, as the festivals at Bayreuth and Munich do indeed draw audiences from all over the world. Ingenuous is the word which best describes the explanation for the change in Brunnhildes; one is told that the out-of-town subscribers to the series prefer to hear as many singers as possible. They wish to "compare" Brunnhildes, so to speak. Perhaps the real reason for divergence from common sense is the difficulty the director of the opera-house would have with certain sopranos if one were allowed the full set of performances. As for the change in the setting of Brunnhilde's rock it is pure expediency, nothing else. In *Die Walküre*, in which, between acts, there is plenty of time to change the scenery, a heavy built promontory of rocks is required for the valkyrie brood to stand on. In *Siegfried*

and *Götterdämmerung*, where the scenery must be shifted in short order, this particular setting is only utilized for duets. The heavier elements of the setting are no longer needed and they are dispensed with.

The mechanical devices demanded by Wagner are generally complied with in a stupidly clumsy manner. The first scene of *Das Rheingold* is usually managed with some effect now, although the swimming of the Rhine maidens, who are dressed in absurd long floating green nightgowns, is carried through very badly and seemingly without an idea that such things have been done a thousand times better in other theatres; the changes of scene in *Das Rheingold* are accomplished in such a manner that one fears the escaping steam is damaging the gauze curtains; the worm and the toad are silly contrivances; the effect of the rainbow is never properly conveyed; the ride of the valkyries is frankly evaded by most stage managers; the bird in *Siegfried* flies like a sickly crow; and the final scene in *Götterdämmerung* would bring a laugh from a Bowery audience: some flat scenery flaps over, a number of chorus ladies fall on their knees, there is much bulging about of a canvas sea, and a few red lights appear in the sky; the transformation scenes in *Parsifal* are carried out with as little fidelity to symbolism, or truth, or beauty; and the throwing of the lance in *Parsifal* is always seemingly a wire trick rather than a magical one.

The scenery for the Wagner dramas in all the theatres where I have seen and heard them, has been built (and a great deal of it in recent years from new designs) with seemingly an absolute ignorance or a determined evasion of the fact that there are artists who are now working in the theatre. In making this statement I can speak personally of performances I have seen at the Metropolitan Opera House, New York; the Auditorium, Chicago; Covent Garden Theatre, London; La Scala, Milan; the Opéra, Paris; and the Prinz-Regenten Theater in Munich. Are there theatres where the Wagner dramas are better given? I do not think so. Compare the scenery of *Götterdämmerung* at the Metropolitan Opera House with that of *Boris Godunow* and you will see how little care is being taken of Wagner's ideals. In the one case the flimsiest sort of badly painted and badly lighted canvas, mingled indiscriminately with plastic objects, boughs, branches, etc., placed next to painted boughs and branches, an effect calculated to throw the falsity of the whole scene into relief; in the other case an example of a scene painter's art wrought to give the highest effect to the drama it decorates. Take the

decoration of the hall of the Gibichs in which long scenes are enacted in both the first and last acts of *Götterdämmerung*. The Gibichs are a savage, warlike, sinister, primitive race. Now it is not necessary that the setting in itself be strong, but it must suggest strength to the spectator. There is no need to bring stone blocks or wood blocks on the stage; the artist may work in black velvet if he wishes (it was of this material that Professor Roller contrived a dungeon cell in *Fidelio* which seemed to be built of stone ten feet thick). It will be admitted, I think, by anyone who has seen the setting in question that it is wholly inadequate to express the meaning of the drama. The scenes could be sung with a certain effect in a Christian Science temple, but no one will deny, I should say, that the effect of the music may be greatly heightened by a proper attention to the stage decoration and the movement of the characters in relation to the lighting and the decoration. (I have used the Metropolitan Opera House, in this instance, as a convenient illustration but the scenery there is no worse, on the whole, than it is in many of the other theatres I have named.)

The secret at the bottom of the whole matter is that the directors of the singing theatres wish to save themselves trouble. They will neither spend money nor energy in righting this wrong. It is easier to trust to tradition on the one hand and expediency on the other than it would be to engage an expert (one not concerned with what had been done, but one concerned with what to do) to produce the works. *Carmen* was losing its popularity in this country when Emma Calvé, who had broken all the rules made for the part by Galli-Marié, enchanted opera-goers with her fantastic conception of the gypsy girl. Bizet's work had dropped out of the *répertoire* again when Mme. Bresslar-Gianoli arrived and carried it triumphantly through nearly a score of performances during the first season of Oscar Hammerstein's Manhattan Opera House. Geraldine Farrar and Toscanini resuscitated the Spanish jade a third time. An Olive Fremstad or a Lilli Lehmann or a Milka Ternina can perform a like office for *Götterdämmerung* or *Tristan und Isolde* but it is to a new producer, an Adolphe Appia or a Gordon Craig, that the theatre director must look for the final salvation of Wagner, through the complete realization of his own ideals. It must be obvious to anyone that the more completely the meaning of his plays is exposed by the decoration, the lighting, and the action, the greater the effect.

Adolphe Appia wrote a book called *Die Musik und die Inszenierung* which was published in German, in 1899. (An earlier





RING  
RHEINGOLD WALTALANDSCHAFT

Stand der Bühne während  
der ersten Scene.



Stand der Bühne beim  
Fallen des Vorhangs.

RING  
WALKÜRE, III. Akt.

work, *La mise-en-scène du drame Wagnérien*, appeared in Paris in 1893.) Since then his career has been strangely obscure for one whose effect on artists working at stage decoration has been greater than that of any other single man. In the second edition of his book, *On the Art of the Theatre*, Gordon Craig in a footnote, speaks thus of Appia:

Appia, the foremost stage-decorator of Europe, [the italics are mine] is not dead. I was told that he was no more with us, so, in the first edition of this book I included him among the shades. I first saw three examples of his work in 1908, and I wrote a friend asking, "Where is Appia and how can we meet?" My friend replied, "Poor Appia died some years ago." This winter (1912) I saw some of Appia's designs in a portfolio belonging to Prince Wolkonsky. They were divine; and I was told that the designer was still living.

Loomis Taylor, who, during the season of 1914-15, staged the Wagner operas at the Metropolitan Opera House (and it was not his fault that the staging was not improved; there is no stage director now working who has more belief in and knowledge of the artists of the theatre than Loomis Taylor) has written me, in response to a query, the following regarding Appia:

Adolphe Appia, I think, is a French-Swiss; he is a young man. The title of the book which made him famous, in its German translation, is *Die Musik und die Inszenierung*. It was translated from the French by Princess Cantacuzène . . . Five years ago I was told by Mrs. Houston Stewart Chamberlain that Appia was slowly but surely starving to death in some picturesque surroundings in Switzerland. I then tried to get various people in Germany interested in him, also proposing him to Hagemann as scenic artist for Mannheim. Two years later, before his starving process had reached its conclusion, I heard of him as collaborator with Jacques-Dalcroze at his temple of rhythm on the banks of the Elbe, outside of Dresden, where, I think, up to the outbreak of the war, Appia was doing very good work, but what has become of him since I do not know.

His book is very valuable; his suggestions go beyond the possibilities of the average hof-theater, while in Bayreuth they have a similar effect to a drop of water upon a stone, sun-burned by the rays of Cosima's traditions. By being one of the first—if not *the* first—to put in writing the inconsistency of using painted perspective scenery and painted shadows with human beings on the stage, Appia became the fighter for plastic scenery. His sketch of the *Walküren* rock is the most beautiful scenic conception of Act III *Die Walküre*, I know of or could imagine. To my knowledge no theatre has ever produced anything in conformity with Appia's sketches.

In a letter to me Hiram Kelly Moderwell, whose book, *The Theatre of To-day*, is the best exposition yet published of the aims

and results of the artists who are working in the theatre, writes as follows in regard to Appia:

Appia is now with Dalcroze at Hellerau and I believe has designed and perhaps produced all the things that have been done there in the last year or two. Previous to that I am almost certain he had done no actual stage work. Nobody else would give him free rein. But, as you know, he thought everything out carefully as though he were doing the actual practical stage work. . . . By this time he has hit his "third manner." It's all cubes and parallelograms. It sounds like hell on paper but Maurice Browne told me it is very fine stuff. Browne says it is as much greater than Craig as Craig is greater than anybody else. All the recent Hellerau plays are in this third manner. They are lighted by Salzman, indirect and diffused lighting, but not in the Fortuny style. I imagine the Hellerau stuff is rather too precious to go on the ordinary stage.

Mr. Moderwell's description of Appia's book is so completely illuminating that I feel I cannot do better than to quote the entire passage from *The Theatre of To-day*:

Before his (Gordon Craig's) influence was felt, however, Adolphe Appia, probably the most powerful theorist of the new movement, had written his remarkable book, *Die Musik und die Inszenierung*. In this, as an artist, he attempted to deduce from the content of the Wagner music dramas the proper stage settings for them. His conclusions anticipated much of the best work of recent years and his theories have been put into practice in more or less modified form on a great many stages—not so much (if at all) for the Wagner dramas themselves, which are under a rigid tradition (the "what the Master wished" myth) but for operas and the more lyric plays where the producer has artistic ability and a free hand in applying it.

Appia started with the principle that the setting should make the actor the all-important fact on the stage. He saw the realistic impossibility of the realistic setting, and destructively analyzed the current modes of lighting and perspective effects. But, unlike the members of the more conventional modern school, he insisted that the stage is a three-dimension space and must be handled so as to make its depth living. He felt a contradiction between the living actor and the dead setting. He wished to bind them into one whole—the drama. How was this to be done?

Appia's answer to this question is his chief claim to greatness—genius almost. His answer was—"By means of the lighting." He saw the deadness of the contemporary methods of lighting, and prefigured with a sort of inspiration the possibilities of new methods which have since become common. This was at a time when he had at his disposal none of the modern lighting systems. His foreseeing of modern practice by means of rigid Teutonic logic in the service of the artist's intuition makes him one of the two or three foremost theorists of the modern movement.

RING  
GÖTTERDÄMMERUNG



III. Akt, I. Bild  
Skizze



Stand der Bühne beim  
Fallen des Vorhangs.

TRISTAN UND ISOLDE  
III. Akt.



The lighting, for Appia, is the spiritual core, the soul of the drama. The whole action should be contained in it, somewhat as we feel the physical body of a friend to be contained in his personality. Appia's second great principle is closely connected with this. While the setting is obviously inanimate, the actor must in every way be emphasized and made living. And this can be accomplished, he says, only by a wise use of lighting, since it is the lights and shadows on a human body which reveal to our eyes the fact that the body is "plastic"—that is, a flexible body of three dimensions. Appia would make the setting suggest only the atmosphere, not the reality of the thing it stands for, and would soften and beautify it with the lights. The actor he would throw constantly into prominence while keeping him always a part of the scene. All the elements and all the action of the drama he would bind together by the lights and shadows.

With the most minute care each detail of lighting, each position of each character, in Appia's productions is studied out so that the dramatic meaning shall always be evident. Hence any setting of his contains vastly more thought than is visible at a glance. It is designed to serve for every exigency of the scene—so that a character here shall be in full light at a certain point, while talking directly to a character who must be quite in the dark, or that the light shall just touch the fringe of one character's robe as she dies, or that the action shall all take place unimpeded, and so on. At the same time, needless to say, Appia's stage pictures are of the highest artistic beauty.<sup>1</sup>

In Appia's design for the third act of *Die Walküre*, so enthusiastically praised by Loomis Taylor, the rock of the valkyries juts like a huge promontory of black across the front of the scene, silhouetted against a clouded sky. So all the figures of the valkyries stand high on the rock and are entirely silhouetted, while Sieglinde below in front of the rock in the blackness, is hidden from the rage of the approaching Wotan. Anyone who has seen this scene as it is ordinarily staged, without any reference to beauty or reason, will appreciate even this meagre description of an artist's intention, which has not yet been carried out in any theatre with which I have acquaintance.

Appia's design for the first scene of *Parsifal* discloses a group of boughless, straight-stemmed pines, towering to heaven like the cathedral group at Vallombrosa. Overhead the dense foliage hides the forest paths from the sun. Light comes in through the centre at the back, where there is a vista of plains across to the mountains, on which one may imagine the castle of the Grail. He plans a dynamic and dramatic value on light which it is highly important to understand in estimating his work. For

<sup>1</sup>For a further discussion of Appia's work and its probable influence on Gordon Craig, see an article "Adolphe Appia and Gordon Craig" in my book *Music After the Great War* (from which the illustrations accompanying this article are taken).

example his lighting of the second act of *Tristan und Isolde* culminates in a *pitch dark* stage during the singing of the love duet.

This artist has designed the scenery for all the *Ring* and has indicated throughout what the lighting and action shall be.

I do not know that Gordon Craig has turned his attention to any particular Wagner drama, although he has made suggestions for several of them, but he could, if he would, devise a mode of stage decoration which would make the plays and their action as appealing in their beauty as the music and the singing often now are. In his book, *On the Art of the Theatre*, he has been explicit in his descriptions of his designs for *Macbeth*, and the rugged strength and symbolism of his settings and ideas for that tragedy proclaim perhaps his best right to be a leader in the reformation of the Wagner dramas, although, even then, it must be confessed that Craig is derived in many instances from Appia, whom Craig himself hails as the foremost stage decorator of Europe to-day.

Read Gordon Craig on *Macbeth* and you will get an idea of how an artist would go to work on *Tristan und Isolde* or *Götterdämmerung*.

I see two things, I see a lofty and steep rock, and I see the moist cloud which envelops the head of this rock. That is to say, a place for fierce and warlike men to inhabit, a place for phantoms to nest in. Ultimately this moisture will destroy the rock; ultimately these spirits will destroy the men. Now then, you are quick in your question as to what actually to create for the eye. I answer as swiftly—place there a rock! Let it mount high. Swiftly I tell you, convey the idea of a mist which hangs at the head of this rock. Now, have I departed at all for one-eighth of an inch from the vision which I saw in the mind's eye?

But you ask me what form this rock shall take and what color? What are the lines which are the lofty lines, and which are to be seen in any lofty cliff? Go to them, glance but a moment at them; now quickly set them down on your paper; *the lines and their direction*, never mind the cliff. Do not be afraid to let them go high; they cannot go high enough; and remember that on a sheet of paper which is but two inches square you can make a line which seems to tower miles in the air, and you can do the same on your stage, for it is all a matter of proportion and has nothing to do with actuality.

You ask about the colors? What are the colors which Shakespeare has indicated for us? Do not first look at Nature, but look at the play of the poet. Two, one for the rock, the man; one for the mist, the spirit. Now, quickly, take and accept this statement from me. Touch not a single other color, but only these two colors through your whole progress of designing your scenes and your costumes, yet forget not that each color contains many variations. If you are timid for a moment and

mistrust yourself or what I tell, when the scene is finished you will not see with your eye the effect you have seen with your mind's eye when looking at the picture which Shakespeare has indicated.

The producers of the Wagner music dramas do not seem to have heard of Adolphe Appia. Gordon Craig is a myth to them. Reinhardt does not exist. Have they ever seen the name of Stanislawsky? Do they know where his theatre is? Would they consider it sensible to spend three years in mounting *Hamlet*? Is the name of Fokine known to them? of Bakst? N. Roerich, Nathalie Gontcharova, Alexandre Benois, Theodore Federowsky? one could go on naming the artists of the theatre.

For several years the Russian Ballet, under the direction of Serge de Diaghilev, has been presenting operas and ballets in the European capitals, notably in London and Paris for long seasons each summer. A number of artists and a number of stage directors have been working together in staging these works, which, as a whole, may be conceded to be the most completely satisfying productions which have been made on the stage during the progress of this new movement in the theatre. One or two of the German productions, or Gordon Craig's *Hamlet* in Stanislawsky's theatre may have surpassed them in the sterner qualities of beauty, the serious truth of their art, but none has surpassed them in brilliancy, in barbaric splendor, or in their almost complete solution of the problems of mingling people with painted scenery. The Russians have solved these problems by a skillful (and passionately liberal) use of color and light. The painted surfaces are mostly flat, to be sure, and crudely painted, but the tones of the canvas are so divinely contrived to mingle with the tones of the costumes that the effect of an animated picture is arrived at with seemingly very little pother. This method of staging is not, in most instances, it must be admitted, adapted to the requirements of the Wagner dramas. Bakst, I imagine, would find it difficult to cramp his talents in the field of Wagnerism, though he should turn out a very pretty edition of *Das Rheingold*. Roerich, on the other hand, who designed the scenery and costumes for *Prince Igor* as it was presented in Paris and London in the summer of 1914, would find no difficulty in staging *Götterdämmerung*. The problem is the same: to convey an impression of barbarism and strength. One scene I remember in Borodine's opera in which an open window, exposing only a clear stretch of sky—the rectangular opening occupied half of the wall at the back of the room—was made to act the drama. A few red lights skillfully played on the curtain representing the sky made it

seem as if in truth a city were burning and I thought how a similar simple contrivance might make a more imaginative final scene for *Götterdämmerung*.

It is, however, in their handling of mechanical problems that the Russians could assist the new producer of the Wagner dramas to his greatest advantage. In Rimsky-Korsakow's opera, *The Golden Cock*, for instance, the bird of the title has several appearances to make. Now there was no attempt made, in the Russians' stage version of this work, to have this bird jiggle along a supposedly invisible wire, which, in reality is, quite visible, flapping his artificial wings and wiggling his insecure feet, as in the usual productions of *Siegfried*. Instead the bird was built solid like a bronze cock for a drawing room table; he did not flap his wings; his feet were motionless; when the action of the drama demanded his presence he was let down on a wire; there was no pretence of a lack of machinery. The effect, however, was vastly more imaginative and diverting than that in *Siegfried*, because it was more simple. In like manner King Dodon, in the same opera, mounted a wooden horse on wheels to go to the wars, and the animals he captured were also made of wood, studded with brilliant beads. In Richard Strauss's ballet, *The Legend of Joseph*, the figure of the guardian angel was not let down on a wire from the flies as he might have been in a Drury Lane pantomime; the naïve character of the work was maintained by his nonchalant entrance across the *loggia* and down a flight of steps, exactly the entrance of all the human characters of the work. I do not mean to suggest that these particular expedients would fit into the Wagner dramas so well as they do into works of a widely different nature. They should, however, indicate to stage directors the possibility of finding a method to fit the case in each instance. And I do assert, without hope or fear of contradiction, that Brunnhilde with a wooden horse would challenge less laughter than she does with the sorry nags which are put at her disposal and which Siegfried later takes down the river with him. It is only down the river that one can sell such horses. As for the bird, there are bird trainers whose business it is to teach pigeons to fly from pillar to post in vaudeville theatres; their services might be contracted for to make that passage in *Siegfried* a little less distracting. The difficulties connected with this particular mechanical episode (and a hundred others) might be avoided by a different lighting of the scene. If the tree-tops of the forest were submerged in the deepest shadows, as well they might be, the flight of the bird on a wire might be accomplished with some

sort of illusion. But why should one see the bird at all? One hears it constantly as it warbles advice to the hero.

The new Wagner producer must possess many qualities if he wishes to place these works on a plane where they may continue to challenge the admiration of the world. Wagner himself was more concerned with his ideals than he was with their practical solution. Besides, it must be admitted that taste in stage art and improvements in stage mechanism have made great strides in the last decade. The Fortuny lighting dome, for instance, which has replaced in many theatres the flapping, swaying, wrinkled, painted canvas sky cyclorama (still in use at the Metropolitan Opera House; a vast sum was paid for it a few years ago) is a new invention and one which perfectly counterfeits the appearance of the sky in its different moods. (So far as I know the only theatre in New York with this apparatus is the Neighborhood Playhouse on Grand Street.) In Houston Stewart Chamberlain's *Richard Wagner*, published in 1897, I find the following:

Wagner foresaw that in the new drama the whole principle of the stage scenery must undergo a complete alteration but did not particularize in detail. The *Meister* says that "music resolves the rigid immovable groundwork of the scenery into a liquid, yielding, ethereal surface, capable of receiving impressions"; but to prevent a painful conflict between what is seen and what is heard, the stage picture, too, must be relieved from the curse of rigidity which now rests upon it. The only way of doing this is by managing the light in a manner which its importance deserves, that its office may no longer be confined to illuminating painted walls. . . . I am convinced that the next great advance in the drama will be of this nature, in the art of the eye, and not in music. (The passage quoted further refers to Appia's first book, published in French. Chamberlain was a close friend of Appia and *Die Musik und die Inszenierung* is dedicated to him.)

It must also be understood that Wagner in some instances, when the right medium of his expression was clear to him, made concessions to what he considered the unintelligence of the public. Wotan's waving of the sword is a case in point. The *motiv* without the object he did not think would carry out the effect he intended to convey, although the absurdity of Wotan's founding his new humanity on the power of the degenerate giants must have been apparent to him. Sometimes the Master changed his mind. Paris would have none of *Tannhäuser* without a ballet and so Wagner rewrote the first act and now the Paris version of the opera is the accepted one. In any case it must be apparent that what Wagner wanted was a fusion of the arts, and a completely artistic one. So that if anyone can think of a better way

of presenting his dramas than one based on the very halting staging which he himself devised (with the limited means at his command) as perhaps the best possible to exploit his ideals, that person should be hailed as Wagner's friend. It must be seen, at any current presentation of his dramas, that his way, or Cosima's, is not the best way. The single performances which have made the deepest impression on the public have deviated the farthest from tradition. Olive Fremstad's Isolde was far from traditional. Her very costume of deep green was a flaunt in the face of Wagner's conventionally white-robed heroine. In the first act, after taking the love-potion, she did not indulge in any of the swimming movements usually employed by sopranos to pass the time away until the occasion came to sing again. She stood as a woman dazed, passing her hands futilely before her eyes, and it was to be noted that in some instances her action had its supplement in the action of the tenor who was singing with her, although, in other instances, he would continue to swim in the most highly approved Bayreuth fashion. But Olive Fremstad, artist that she was, could not completely divorce herself from tradition; in some cases she held it to against her will. The stage directions for the second act of *Parsifal*, for example, require Kundry to lie on her couch, tempting the hero, for a very long time. Great as Fremstad's Kundry was, it might have been improved if she had allowed herself to move more freely along the lines that her artistic conscience dictated. Her Elsa was a beautiful example of the moulding of the traditional playing of a rôle into a picturesque, imaginative figure, a feat similar to that which Mary Garden accomplished in her delineation of Marguerite in *Faust*. Mme. Fremstad always sang Brunnhilde in *Götterdämmerung* throughout with the fire of genius. This was surely some wild creature, a figure of Greek tragedy, a Norse Elektra. The superb effect she wrought, at her first performance in the rôle, with the scene of the spear, was never tarnished in subsequent performances. The thrill was always there.

In face of acting and singing like that one can afford to ignore Wagner's theory about the wedding of the arts. A Fremstad or a Lehmann can carry a Wagner drama to a triumphant conclusion with few, if any, accessories, but great singing artists are rare; nor does a performance of this kind meet the requirements of the Wagner ideal, in which the picture, the word, and the tone shall all be a part of the drama (*Wort-Tondrama*). Wagner invented a new form of stage art but only in a small measure did he succeed in perfecting a method for its successful presentation. The



artist-producer must arise to repair this deficiency, to become the dominating force in future performances, to see that the scenes are painted in accordance with the principles of beauty and dramatic fitness, to see that they are lighted to express the secrets of the drama, as Appia says they should be, to see that the action is sympathetic with the decoration, and that the decoration never encumbers the action, that the lighting assists both. There never has been a production of the *Ring* which has in any sense realized its true possibilities, the ideal of Wagner.

## MELODY

By OSCAR BIE

**M**ELODY is the coin of the grand, vast, beautiful realm of Music, as it passes through our hands. It is the clearest and most tangible recollection of music which we possess, and the form in which we assimilate it. Very generally speaking, we understand music in the aggregate as melody, and there are many persons who listen to music only for its melody, and reject it when they can hear none. Herein they do music a grievous wrong. Music is melody—but it is also harmony, and rhythm, too. To be sure, there is hardly any one who, under the influence of rhythm alone, evolves music from his inner consciousness (Beethoven possibly did so at times); and even fewer are those who mentally reproduce music as a succession of harmonies only—and such could be found solely among highly trained professional musicians of wellnigh subtle refinement. No, melody abides as the outward manifestation of all music, whereby it is apprehended, assumes a definite outline, and none the less reveals its whole soul. As melody it accompanies us through life, now bearing on its wings the healing of some hurt, now soaring aloft, upborne on some delight; here shortening a wearisome way, and there prolonging a fair daydream; ever ready, in fine, to lend our emotions that decorative line which elevates them above the commonplace and resolves them into a cosmic philosophy; and so life becomes bearable, and our every moment is crowned with some memory, musically fragrant, of something beloved, or heard, or known, that once bore fruit within us. There are times when the melody we happen to be humming does not seem to fit the case—a phrase from *Faust*, or *Cavalleria*, or even *Mignon*, as a relief from some domestic aggravation or from an unmasked deception; or maybe a line of *Die Walküre* while watering flowers or reading a letter—but, after all, each answers the purpose.

But now I shall be serious—although this playful, associative activity of melody within the recesses of our brain strikes me as highly essential—and attempt a definition. Every definition falsifies. Thus, as a definition, it is quite correct that music divides into these three elements: The melodic, or succession of tones;

the harmonic, their sounding together; and the rhythmic, the measurement of their time-intervals. But the value of this conception is philosophical rather than practical. True enough, music possesses these three elements of song, of framework, of measured motion; they constitute its three atmospheres, in which it touches the earth; and everything that has voice and seeks expression and a style for the manifestation of its inner life will find in melody the consummation of its longing, as everything that builds and piles up and gathers things into bounded and orderly relations must find its paradise in the harmony of chords, and everything that moulds this incomprehensibly eternal, endlessly and tirelessly onrolling, unremittingly urgent and all-conquering, overwhelming Time into measure and form must set up rhythm as its law. These elements which attain, in music, to Style, Form, and Unity, are cosmic impulses, symbols of the universal artistic endeavor, verities of limitless horizon. In reality, however, they do not lie side by side, but, as in the world of matter, they interpenetrate and intermingle, and, indeed, are so interactive and interdependent that the one appears hardly possible without the other.

The moment we conceive a melody as a succession of tones, it hovers incorporeal unless we straightway stabilize it harmonically and rhythmically. We mentally supply to it a harmony which, perhaps, we have heard so often that it has passed into our subconsciousness; or we construct one below it quite involuntarily, vague at the outset, following (as it were) the principal curves of its rise and fall; finally trying it, let us say, at the piano and bringing it into satisfactory shape. And, similarly, the melody directly finds its rhythmical form, assumes measure and metre, retards or accelerates; for without such time-division we should have a feeling of emptiness and vacillation, as of melody wandering in a timeless void. Hence, it follows that it may be scientifically correct to consider a melody merely as a succession of tones occupying time; but, artistically, it cannot be divorced from a consciousness of harmony and rhythm, because just through these it gains an individuality of nature, its soul, which is no random juxtaposition of tones thrown down like a dicer's cast, but the contour of an expression rooted in the elements of all art.

Indeed, we must go still further, and detach ourselves from Melody regarded as a strictly-bounded concept—a piece of flesh carved out of the body of Music, so to speak—that we may grasp the idea of its nature as the melody universal which, above and beyond the soul of the individual living melody, embraces all that

has movement and duration in the sphere of tones. Not merely do we intuitively hear a harmony beneath the melody; in the harmony, too, we intuitively feel the melody; and the manner in which the harmonies themselves regulate the intelligible chords—the “harmony universal” likewise thrones above the living “chord”—takes its direction from melodic laws and the feeling for melody. The melodic element gives the chords substance, type and form precisely as the rhythmic element moulds the melodic. All are intermingled, and change their shape with the epoch. The eighteenth century was architectonic in its harmony; it ordered the succession of chords according to the rather narrow limitations of a style fathered by a conventional circle of fifths—Tonic, Dominant and Subdominant, Mediant, etc.—with a mathematical exactitude which became a “School.” Above this framework it erected the melody along somewhat constricted lines, thus establishing from below an harmonico-melodic unity. Our modern time has come to the contrary procedure. It has suspended the harmonies from the superposed melodic line, which no longer shrank from chromatic excesses; it has projected its sense of melody down into the chords, imparting to them their (still entirely organic) connection through the animated soul of the melody-line—a victory of expression over symmetry. The further back it pushed that symmetrical melody of the earlier architectural epoch, the more universally melodic grew its feeling; instead of a “melody,” the melody universal began to hold sway—endless melody, as it is often called. All this is simply a compromise between the harmonic and melodic principles. Formerly the harmonic principle leaned to the melodic, because the harmony was already felt in the melody. To-day the reverse is the case. At all events, the entire sense-effect of melody rests not merely on the clear-cut phrase, but spreads over the total complex of the tonal movement in chord and melody.

Returning to the melody itself, we shall now comprehend that it no longer suffices us to label the ordinary, popular, straitly-limited tune as melody, but that we must recognize every melodic phrase, whether short or long, whether question or answer, whether finished or fragmentary, as an appreciable form of melodic expression. The melody which runs along above the harmonies as a distinctly drawn outline in the treble is only a part of that great realm of expression which reveals itself here in a phrase of three tones and there in the broad sweep of an extended chain of harmonies. Accordingly, our conception of the melody-element divides into the *general*, which covers the entire wave-movement

of music, and the *particular*, which specifies the tonally limited field of some special desire for expression (with as many contours as one will). From a blurred *glissando* up to a sharply defined song-melody, all steps of the series are herewith included. The intermediate links supply the fruitful nuances. For, when a form in art is erected into a principle, it becomes lifeless. But when a principle seeks after forms, plenitude of life results. Such is the case here.

Now, when we disengage the melody from the general wave-movement of the music, to fix its individual contour or contours, we plainly perceive that it must find its most pregnant expression in these latter. The chord-movement is a heavy mass lacking, as it were, a voice. From out of this heavy mass the voice of melody escapes as a sensible phenomenon. And it reveals itself to us, not as the stupid and exclusive "popular" melody, but as a form wherein a particle of the nature of music reaches the goal of its ultimate endeavor.

The popular melody soars aloft in the treble above the accompaniment; outwardly it is the highest and most penetrating factor in the musical ensemble, and the untrained ear accepts it as the adequate total impression of the music. But the real melody is neither above, nor below, nor in the middle, nor at any established place according to pitch; it should be conceived solely according to its breadth, its lateral extension, whatever position in the ensemble its course may occupy. And here we arrive at the second problem in melody—its Geology; the first, as above, being its Nature.

The geology of melody is the theory of its position amid the strata of the music as built up or developed, its place in the lower, intermediate, or higher regions. The notion that it is usually at the top is not simply a merely popular one, but also a mistaken one. For example, there have been times when the high male voice in the choir carried the melody (whence its appellation, "tenor"), against which the upward-striving voice was called "alto," and the contrapuntal highest part "discant." And so this melody-bearing voice may now sing in the depths, now in the middle region, and again on the heights, at the composer's pleasure. The musician finds no difficulty in conceiving the whole play of figurate tones around a mid-central *cantus firmus* as a sort of accompaniment, or in subordinating all the higher parts to a melody-bearing bass. For him there is here no more Over or Under than in infinite space. And nevertheless, the veritably irruptive, liberative, illuminative modern melody will always abide aloft, will be

borne by the violins, oboes, trumpets, sopranos, not by bassoons or double-basses, because only in this region does it assume that radiant, overmastering temper which is adequate to such demands. For the geology of melody has grown from a science into an art; the melody-stratum has character and color, thus enhancing its capacity for expression. The Ninth Symphony gives a grand recitative to the basses, thereby showing forth the struggle of nether powers; sung by sopranos, it would have seemed childish. To a mournful viola or a penetrative 'cello one entrusts central melodies betokening a hidden grief that dreads the light. But in the sextet of *The Bartered Bride* the soprano overrides all the lower degrees to intensify the splendor and mastery of emotion.

The conception of "accompaniment" has also grown out of history into life. Among the ranks of the bourgeoisie the naked melody doubtless hankers after the garb of a chordal accompaniment, and develops recognizably only when supported by the harmonies of some extraneous music-apparatus. Then it stands forth in yet balder relief, dragging the chords behind it as satellites. But one should not despise it on that account. Such a trailing accompaniment is by no means on the level of a figured bass, nor is it an elaboration of musico-theoretical study. It has grown into the likeness of a sweet repose on the pillows of the familiar chords, whereon the melody lies in a very tidy and conscious loveliness. The chords on the lute—and the lighter the better, the more Italian the more amiable—are a charming decoration which lends a mundane setting to the vital energy of the melody. It is the imperishable charm of all serenades.

Out of the rigid thorough-bass the accompaniment unfolds itself through rhythmical chords into all the independent phenomena that reflexively awaken in its own body. Not a voice therein but craves to live its own—that is, a melodic—life; to tread the ladder of harmonies with emotional or even sportive step down into the facile, dramatic rivalries of their geological strata, upheaved according to age and importance as a playground for the powers of the interacting voices. What, then, remains as accompaniment? The conception of accompaniment exists by reason of contrast to the hegemony of melody, wherefrom it is inseparable—its lowly handmaid, the shadow thrown by its light. But the writer of its history would have to enumerate the thousandfold nuances whereby the accompaniment becomes a picture, a painting, which intentionally avoids or emphasizes the elaboration of details, melodically emancipates or domesticates itself, according to position and class of its melody and the standard of the



period. He who, endowed with fullness of knowledge and a wealth of imagination, will follow the series from the old secco recitative up to the *Lied* of Hugo Wolf, can finish the picture for himself. The whole represents the train, and at the same time the triumph, of the goddess Melody.

But the play grows more involved; the melody not only favors the train of satellites in the accompaniment, but also permits the simultaneous emergence of other melodies which are in any way harmonically related to it, and thus are, or become, contrapuntally engaged. The contrasting of diverse melodies, first of all a proof of technical artistry, became thereafter a means for complicated expression, which not only displays the contrasted melodies, but also their common atmosphere. When every-day folk-tunes were thrust into medieval Masses, the resulting complex was a mere play of the labeller's art supported by a total uncomprehension of characteristic values in melody. It is a more recent bit of sentimentality to consider melody bound by text. Only in later times did it become a matter of conscience in music that a melody should maintain its character even in variations. Even now it is hardly a generally accepted maxim that a contrapuntal tone-painting should present a picture of stormy emotions which strive to unify their motives after contest and counterplay. This is most fully attained in the German opera. When Wagner contrapuntally clashes theme against theme, motive against motive, to recall earlier scenes, they form the desired picture of a musical collision of divergent emotions. Therefore, certain passages in *Tristan* will stand for ever as a triumph of counterpoint; it is no clever conceit nor skill in art that guides these furiously interwrithing melodic lines—it is poignant emotion. Here the sensitive ear realizes to the full the charm of the possibilities indwelling in polyphonic climaxes.

The purest form of melodic geology is straight polyphony with a total absence of accompanying parts. Musicians of the middle ages, possessing the conception of melody as a pleasure, to be sure, but not as a function, let the chorus-parts run on in undesigned contours in such wise that, at their points of meeting, undesigned harmonies resulted. Modern music developed its consciousness out of both processes, and thus created what we term functional melody and harmony. While developing the progression of the single part in its most abstract purity, guided by the most abstract laws of harmonic suggestion, it created the forms of the Fugue, wherein nothing but melodies run on above and below each other in such consistent fashion that not only is the sensuous property of melody set aside, but even the isolated charm

of melody is renounced in favor of a compulsory polyphony. This is the veritable "pure culture" of the naked melody. Wholly undraped, it now becomes a study of action in music—a study unsurpassable for its instructiveness and in structural exposition; a metaphysical portrayal of beauty which carries out the harmonic possibilities of melody into its Olympic impassibility, wherein harmonies and melodies appear wellnigh undistinguished. Here melody wins final mastery over the entire body musical; its geological triumph, before which the human individuality sinks, devout and awe-stricken, to the ground. There is nothing left to desire or chance. For melody, one can scarce speak of melody. It is a phenomenon of Nature, and so imposing that haply we are sometimes compelled to take thought of it when hearing a choral fugue by Bach, just that we may not speak of it. When we have made up our minds to it, when aught of the kindly and emotional nature of melody should hover over these lines—then we sound the depths of the shattered soul of man.

Thus we pass into the third realm of melody—from its phenomenology through its geology to its chronology. Such are the several reactions of times, races, and humanity, upon this phenomenon. Melody, as the expression of psychical emotions, pushes out variously in succeeding epochs; it is capable of variation according to the content and form it receives from a climate; it is shaded according to the instrument to which it is confided—instrument or human voice. Thus, wrapped up in its chronology, we also find a multifold ethnology.

Wafted from the Orient comes the melodic arabesque. Born vocally, and with a plaintive human thrill even when transferred to an instrument, it sways in sweeping, wayward surges which seemingly tend nowhither, which tolerate no supporting harmonies, and bear to us a final living reminder of the ancient Greek monody that followed, without harmonic support, the rise and fall of the voice with the subtlest enharmonic inflections. In the Orient of to-day it has become an intoxication with the agile and ever-fluctuating play of tones that seem to burst like an ecstatic cadence from the soul, in a flight toward limitless horizons whither the inner vision dreamily gazes after. Now and again on desert journeyings, or when the mule-drivers of Eastern lands are singing to the monotonous tramp of their caravans, such melody may caressingly steal into European ears, in its native vigor and artlessness. In our ritual it runs a more measured course, where its elementary forces play around the rock of Gregorian chant, or where, in the Hebraic rites, its long, silky fringes trail downward

from the weft of national tradition. To all this, Protestantism opposed the straitly delimited song of the West in serried, armorclad ranks—an earthly chorale pitted against the chaunts of Heaven. But the playful arabesque, mindful of its ethnological tint, overscapes in many ways into our Western art-style, brightening it with scintillant gems. The Neapolitan arabesque, a tone-slide in thirds, a siroccolet of all cadenzas, is like a flash of Saracenic soul-life. In Cornelius' opera *The Barber of Bagdad* the muezzin's call seems an incrustation of Oriental enamel; though wrapt in the ecstasy of swaying *melos*, it nevertheless is welded in the school of the Occidental fugato. And the plaintive strain in *Tristan*—not Orient, not Occident, neither Celtic nor any other exotic tone-tracery, invested with the colorful charm of all aloofness of mood, seemingly unharmonic, cradled in the self-enjoyment of the English horn, self-questioning and self-answering—this strain is a marvellously kaleidoscopic concept of non-European melody, yet, even so, merged in our musical system and, after its monodic outbreathing into empty air, caught up by the chromatic stream of the work to settle on the ground of our art.

In contrast with the melting charm of the exotic, there stands, ready from early times in its trim and prim toilet, the songlet of the West. Born, not of aimlessly onrolling monodies, but of the rhythmically measured dance, it kept pace in growth with the dance. Still encumbered with heavy and awkward movements corresponding to a yet unawakened space-perception, it is readier than "official" music in assimilating its melody, which, circulating within the natural "circle of fifths," with slender resources wins the mastery over that primitive round of variations on a few alternating tones to which the folk-song owes its yet undiminished charm. What a vast deal can be done with C and E and G, with a little D and F in between, not to mention a side-trip to A! Now engage the support of nearly-related keys, draw some few effective parallel lines, build up your melody essentially in gable-form, and you have something quite unsurpassable. If you diagrammatize the structural development of old folk-songs, you will obtain a line recurring with the regularity of a law of nature. In this ever-repeated conformability to law, in the strophic phrasing, in the accommodation of the text to the unvarying musical pattern, there lies a pride of sentiment. Whatever Fate may bring will be moulded into the selfsame and ever-revivified mass of beautiful musical thought, wherein it is translated into a celestial eternity—not the fatalistic state of the Orient, but the purposeful life of the Occident. As I write these lines, old warsongs are resounding

about me. By whom were their melodies conceived? They are nameless—and ownerless, too. They have belonged to centuries that assuaged their griefs by singing these same melody-lines in thousandfold repetition. And through this they have only gained in power of expression, for they are laden with memories. Melody is the magnet in music. It attracts every emotion brought within its sphere, and grows in attractiveness with the growth of the material it works upon.

Melody appeals to the great races according to its structure. Each of the peculiarly musical peoples possesses its specific melody; and through all mixing of the races this melody has still retained its own features and its individual style of movement. The extremes are found in Italian and German melody.

Italian melody, entirely vocal in conception, is of marvellous delicacy and pliancy, full of passion and dreadfully self-seeking. It goes into ecstasies over its own existence, and exults in all the dramatic poses which the political fashion of its homeland may suggest. Owing to the elasticity of the Italian throat, it has never taken on very set or precise forms; it has possessed itself of the wealth of embellishment which adorns ancient music like a blossomy shower of rococo delights, and made a sport thereof, swinging and swaying in airy flight to glide up and down the scale, through *portamento* and *staccato*, exhausting every rhythm and all possibilities of the vocal register. Around a faint, melancholy ground-harmony, a vestige yet remaining from the genuine folk-song, it weaves the glamour of artistry. Whether in the crinoline of by-gone fashion, or the abrupt emphasis of modern style, or in the heyday of Rossinian song, which right royally puffed out the *fioriture* of the human larynx into the buoyant air, this melody is always and everywhere the expression of Melody as such—a striving for the obvious and ear-tickling emergence of the solo part and the sensuous charm of its flowing outline. It delights in its members, and will practise no full self-denial for the sake of any theory or any taste whatsoever, even though dashed into atoms therefor. It rules its music, fashions it, illumines it, and gives it the final form wherein it continues to exist. And over that music it still hovers long as an idolized goddess whose cult is the innate disposition of the race.

German melody has grown through restraints. In the grand style it is ashamed of its nude existence, and gladly borrows any manner of excuse for being. From early times it has confided itself to instruments; not (like Italian melody) as a means of more extended virtuosity, but as if it found therein its peculiar calm

and wordless fatherland, where it can tell of its feelings in admirably symbolic song. In this field it has elevated the form of thematic work to a method, and developed instrumental melodic speech both in the symphony and the symphonic opera to a rare height of mysticism and an extraordinary manifestation. It taught the German musician to understand melody from this aspect, so that frequently enough he accepted its stiff and pedantic lines as a standard for his invention; an admirable example of this we find in Tannhäuser's song to Venus. But then another vehicle of expression was put in its way—none other than language. Not the Word, the Text, whose tatters the Italian flourishes in autocratic musical revel, but the language, this so highly cultivated, autonomous, and, in itself, submusical speech with every rhythm known to the phrase, to verse and to verbal inflection. Slowly awakening out of eighteenth-century formalism, German melody presses on to an ever-closer union with speech, following it through strophe and sentence, and finally in the expression of the single word. Whatever it lost thereby as regards the absolute beauty of vocal display, it gained in sincerity and depth of feeling. This melody, in the *Lied* and in the opera, is not masterful, but disciplined; it does service to music and to truth. It does not prink—it attires itself. It does not post its nakedness behind transparent veils, but enhances by means of its robe the purity of motion of its body. And thus, in full consciousness, it has gone forward from Mozart down to Brahms. Through this process of restraint it clings far more closely to the creative personality, and individualizes itself far more variously, than in the formal scheme of Italy. Thus it becomes all soul, having fought its way through all restraints of its own choosing and so, purified by opposition joyously endured, breaking forth in its loftiest moments in such irresistible power of expression and impassioned self-revelment, that we award it the crown of suffering.

These are the merest outlines of the nature of melody, as deduced from the material historically collected in the form of general characteristics which are familiar to us all because daily reiterated in actual examples. Between these extremes lie two other melody-groups having equally well-known characteristics. Russian melody has never succeeded in establishing a wholly specific style. It vacillates between its old national motives, strongly Slavic in color, sweet and sad with rhythmic trot, and the powerful influences of romantic Germany. On the other hand, French melody has found a more positive unity betwixt virtuosity and romanticism, through which it has gained a wide

ascendancy. Always subtly influenced by the national half-sentimental, half-coquettish *chanson*, thrilled by a lively feeling for the seductively emotional line of lyric *melos*, wholly devoted to the generous expression of a highly susceptible passion, and presently carried away on the wings of soul-stirring, sharply accented rhythm, French melody has become the worldwide melody, the unconditionally melodic melody, beautiful melody in itself, which has maintained its secular universality amidst Italian *bravura*, German depth of feeling, Russian sadness, English dance-acrobatics, the Vienna waltz, and all the Habaneras, Krakoviaks, Polkas and Czardas, with their endless variety of national cadences. How utterly, in this French melody, is Melody the soul of Music, and Music the soul of the World!

The great boon of melody—of that melody which is called, so very simply and unhesitatingly, “beautiful” melody—is variously apportioned at different periods and to different peoples. To-day it is of peculiar interest to us from the circumstance that, realizing how barren of melody is our time—though probably quite justifiably so—we none the less yearn for the opposite condition. To us melody seems the steadfast and sonorous ideal of a culture whose course of development is external, whose style is manifest to the senses, whose form and pose are the result of long experience, and which is so obliging as to express its whole soul in this ingratiating profile; an ideal which seeks, in place of artistry and erudition, a language from and of the people and acceptable and familiar to the people. We say: For us, melody is lost. We say: Our music and our nature are absorbed in a spasmodic polyphony, avoid the simply natural, accept mind for feeling and aloofness for experience, and are blindly committed to their selfness and their materialism. Be ours once again the lovely line of heart-revelation, and the grateful tones of a resolute conviction! Does such melody still exist, or was it used up in times past, and become a mere fraudulent plagiarism? Are the permutations exhausted, through which the melodic possibilities of these few tones could find expression? Is melody a form of earlier epochs—a form which, once non-existent, is again to vanish utterly? I am almost inclined to think so, although it were presumption to disprove some unknown genius of the future by an historical calculus. At all events, melody is to-day a fossil museum-exhibit, an echo from hearts of by-gone days, elusive to every form of social endeavor. For it is the real individual element in music; it is a most personal reaction—almost a romantic heirloom in these times of polyphonic organization and promoters’ carousal, both peaceful and



warlike. It is buried deep in the earth—and it waiting. Its great inventors—Mozart, Schubert—sing to us out of a far-away time when, amid all turmoil, one still possessed a gardenplot which one might fill, like a bird, with life and song.

This history of melody presents itself to us in a series of polar contrasts, which we select as points of intersection to show, by these same personal reactions of the inventors on the nature of melody, how it grew and advanced to extinction. They must serve us as samples, taken at random, of the whole unsurveyable course of development.

Mozart became the transcendent prophet of melody. For us he is the culmination of that architectural epoch in music which builds up member on member according to formal laws, towering to a point of highest energy infused with emotion in so far as the architectural plan does not interfere with it. Here not only every composition, and each measure of every composition, whether in opera, sonata or chamber-music, strews its blooms along a topmost line, the chosen favorite that controls and illumines the whole construction; but this line is fashioned with all the psychic flexibility of which the musical imagination is capable. For this melody the music lives, and lives through it and in it throughout all times and in all spheres. With Beethoven this is no longer the case. In his music, rhythm is the groundwork, if anything is to be singled out as the controlling element. Upon this rhythm rise harmony and melody as built up by his will. Melody is there, but not as final arbiter; it becomes a theme, a motive, it showers blossoms on the weft, it transforms phrases into concrete organisms; finally, in the slow movements and important arias, it emerges for once in full earnest as a broad, swelling stream, but, in this very case, as conscious melody, as one melodic form among many, as *characteristic*—precisely as all things new or old live in his works only in so far as they can take on character. And because melody with Mozart is the essence, and with Beethoven the means, the former artist's attitude towards it is more equable; whereas Beethoven's attitude turns into a struggle, a contention against the merely sensuous, merely amiable content of melody, from the conventionalities of his first Rondos to the broad plains of his last Quartets, where melody is wholly assimilated into his personal speech. The natural expression of melody has retreated into the material to be formed.

A similar difference, though in another direction, exists between the melody-invention of Rossini and Wagner. I do not compare them from the moral point of view. But Rossini is a

tremendous melodist, because he founds all his music solely on the solistic play within the singer's larynx, and, but slightly burdened by feeling, does nothing but put fine phrases into his mouth wherewith he can excel. This melody wings aloft, untrammelled by speech or emotion. It rejoices in its volatile, un-terrestrial existence, owning only so much that is material as its own element, the air, requires. For this reason it is not at all difficult with regard to its body. It permits variations and *fioriture* in accordance with that ancient law of sensuality which allows seduction to choose her own artifices as mood and opportunity may dictate—the more so, as it recognizes no inner obligation for the course of the melody, knowing naught of its firm substance or essential character. All the old composers wrought in variations in so far as melody, for them, was no more than an outward form, a beautiful succession of notes; and how far this traffic in variation extends into our own time, when even Liszt did not hesitate to dish up *Don Giovanni* or Schubert melodies for the edification of virtuosi! Such things are impossible in Wagnerian circles. Melody, for them, is an indestructible entity in no wise to be made a sport of, possessed in the highest degree of characteristic expression and inviolable symbolism. The variation of the melodic motive does not result in virtuosity, but becomes the mirror of a psychological transformation. And there is no melody, even one so precisely delimited as that of the "winter storms," that may not again be turned into a motive. Nor is there any song (and foremostly in *Tristan*) that will not in itself be a melody for ever; in *Tristan*, indeed, the everlasting soulfelt song-melody, a tale in tone out of speech into music, and one bearing so little the outward form of melody that it suddenly reveals its inner strength in unimagined breadth and power. This melody abides on the earth, abides in the speech, abides in the soul, and the further it advances with Wagner's development, the freer it grows of verse, of song-form, of refrain and repetition; in character and motive as with Beethoven, although applied to the sensualism of the stage in the most unsensual form. Rossini's bird soared away through the air; Wagner's motive is caught back into music.

Schubert and Schumann. — Schubert's tender melodic soul loves singularity—oneness. The singular in melody, the charming thought, the folk-tunelike touch, the amiable return to the tonic, the emotional climax—all these he cultivates as one tends flowers; he pets them, admires them, waters them, and sets them in little pots in the midst of a large and artistic work which appears to interest him only as a frame, as a bed. These flowerets of his are

more original than Mozart's, who had merely a sort of artificially overlaid, Magic-Fluty penchant for folk-song, and aspired to broader fields in the culture of melody. Schumann's melody resembles Schubert's in point of singularity; but it is more reflective. It is not romantic, but romanticistic, and loves the fragrance of flowers less for the flowers' sake than for the fragrance itself. His melody is borne on by strong, intense feeling, reared on memories of everything good in joy or sorrow; as a poet seeks to catch the strains that float through the forest or sweep through the ball-room. This melody has passed through the hearts of men, but was taken down to paper. It does not remain melody pure and simple, like Schubert's, but becomes a motive, a theme, an association, and presents the symbol of a sphere whence it escaped into the realm of art. When it goes over from the instrumental to the vocal, it gains in substance and stability, makes good its claim to a place, as it were, in the soil tilled by literature, to a meaning clarified by the use of words, and discloses powers of the loftiest truth of expression. Schubert's *Lied* is melody; Schumann's is an avowal. These are always the poles—Melody, and the Melodic. On the one hand, Nature; on the other, History.

Chopin and Liszt.—Chopin's impressionable soul finds a melody so full of weird geniality and remotest beauties, that it cannot play and ply enough therein, holding a creative revel, and all on this sole instrument—itself astounded at its own singing. To his caressing finger the melody seems a thing alive. He takes even the acquired virtuosity of the pianoforte into his psychic inventory, and conjures therefrom undreamt-of melodic blooms which drape the lines of the song evoked by the keys with flowery festoons of impassioned fantasy. The exotic element lends its glamour to the charm of the melody-line, inseparable from the sprinkled harmony. Every upward glance, every momentary musing, every dream and every vision, grows to a fairy tale woven of melody, of one melody or as many as three together—so many melodically active layers as may be wrought out with two hands. A wealth of profoundest, and yet not at all sentimental, emotions, of extreme, yet not in the least decadent, musical invention, streams out, binding melodic garlands with infinitely distinguished tact, embroidering melodic ornaments, sketching melodiously on and on in all love and delicacy with the subtlest pencil known to this art, even in passages of most knightly exaltation. What renders Liszt the compeer of Chopin is the sovereign mastery (equally over the virtuose elements), the bearing of a man of the world, the imperial sureness wherewith this art is showered upon

us in an ecstasy of untrammelled freedom overcast with a slight shade of exotic melancholy. But Chopin serves as a lord; Liszt lords it as a servant. Liszt is not love of creation, of invention, of expression through an art subdued to his will; he is love of the world, human kindness, the fullness of that mighty Power that controls every means for the fabrication of a certificate of musical efficiency. His music is not what it fain would be—it only makes a proposition to that effect. It does not rise superior to superficial brilliancy and the prepotency of sensuous effect, however it may convert their use to lofty aims. It has neither the repose nor the intimacy and self-containedness of Chopin's; he imparts a stimulus, and leaves it to friends and pupils, to life and art, to provide the reaction. Hence, Liszt's melody, though seemingly never so deepdrawn, is empty, and his invention, opulent as it is, falls short. The "Gretchen" melody in the second movement of his Faust symphony is of rare breadth—yet it is born of style. Liszt's melody, otherwise, consists of theme and motive, most ingeniously invented and clearly stated, but conceived and elaborated simply as a theme, repeated and split up and painstakingly shifted about during the course of the piece as often as the music-sheet may require. Both Chopin and Liszt have the *cachet* of French fantasy. But Chopin's wealth of invention flows from his fullness of emotion; Liszt's springs only from intelligence. For him melody—the bond between profound emotions striving for utterance and superhuman spiritual illumination—is a placard of mentality.

And so Melody, once Form, then Feeling, has now become Mind. In the world at large, let us set *La Traviata* over against *La Bohème*, or oppose *Carmen* to *Pelléas*; what has been going on? In *La Traviata*, feeling finds no rest until it has discovered its lovely, songful melody—a well-defined, exportable melody that delights in the sweep of its effectively directed course, wherein alone it lives; each more moving than the foregoing, each outdoing the other in passion, sticking at nothing to impose this euphonious convention upon a modern society-drama. In *La Bohème*, melody is shamefaced; however Italian and vocally supple it may bear itself, it seldom ventures to expand into an Aria or any other definable form; it divides and disperses into fine phrases and beginnings and closes, leaves many a needful finishing touch to the orchestra, and shrinks at doing final violence to the Word. Inasmuch as it would allow feeling a logical mode of expression, it obeys the demands of the mind, which ridicules the aria and recognizes only its semblance. In *Carmen*, melody gives free rein

to its temperament; caring little for the conscience of the text and of the isolated expression of feeling, it seeks rather to secure a totality of truthful expression by its tempestuous passion and—through a brilliant diversity in color and rhythm of the melodic line, fed by an unfailing imagination—by its own flesh and blood. Never have the flesh and blood of melody more genially created the body of an opera. This is flesh and blood of one who possessed the ability to invent and did not stand in awe of the intelligence. When *Pelléas* was created, this French virtue had given way before another—the mind. To a mind, unable to admit even the semblance of melody, but so clever and conscientious as to immolate this melody in favor of a loftier, chilly, rationalistic wisdom. Now our good melody is so thoroughly ashamed of its very existence that it has taken to itself wings and flown away, abandoning the field to a highly literary psalmody and an extremely picturesque orchestral accompaniment. It hardly dares raise its voice as the smallest motive. Melody (so says Mind) is childish and obsolete; one sings no melodies when moved—they are songs one learns!

Mind is right! 'tis a thing of the past. In Debussy's case Mind makes a virtue of necessity and resolves on consistency instead of compromise. How difficult the resolution, even though supported by modern music in its entirety! Here at home we are still romantic enough to take it hardily. Humperdinck, for one; he still sings melodies as our forefathers sang them. And Strauss? He, too, has been assailed by Mind. At moments it often happens in his works that the olden melody lays hold on him and, overcome, he throws himself into her arms. But still oftener, when he feels a trifle ashamed, he commandeers her for an accompanying music, for satire and farce, for the sake of style and color, down to the *Rosenkavalier* waltzes. What formerly was character and truth, seems now to be unattainable save as a memory, a product of the printed page. Melody will soon stand in the library and gather dust. Melody, the entity, has disappeared in the Melody Universal; together with the old, beautiful, personal world, it has vanished. And evermore, when a composer who is still able wholly to detach himself from the past, dares revel in it and dream of a future for it, he will fall a victim to the vengeance of a cruel destiny. Like me, myself, if I be mistaken. Then, may the Devil fly away with what I have written to relieve my troubled spirit concerning the rise and the downfall of melody.

(Translated by Theodore Baker)

## KLUCKHUHN'S CHORD

By FRANK LESTER

**Q**UITE accidentally I saw in a Munich paper of recent date the death notice of one Cyrus Kluckhuhn. Thereby hangs the following tale.

In my student days at Munich I often noticed at concerts a middle-aged gentleman of well-to-do appearance. He invariably busied himself with pad and pencil. The natural conclusion was that he belonged to the race of critics.

One evening, this gentleman was introduced at our "Stamm-tish" in one of the artists' night-café's as Herr Cyrus Kluckhuhn. It so happened that I was just holding forth on photisms, color-hearing, habitual and privileged associations, etc., a subject that had been assigned to me in the Psychological Seminary. In those days many people still attributed the rather frequent phenomena of color-hearing, etc. to some pathological disturbance. For this reason I had a beautiful time keeping the discussion, as it were, out of the mad-house, and to convince the motley assembly of poets, painters, musicians, future Virchows or Bismarcks that music often produces in otherwise sane persons the sensation of colors, of designs, of odors, and what not. The polyphonic discussion came to a hilarious end when I repeated the anecdote that Liszt—or was it Bülow?—requested an orchestra to play a certain passage not in yellow, but in pink.

Cyrus Kluckhuhn had listened in solemn silence; but the meditative manner in which he inhaled his cigarette was proof convincing that the subject did not bore him. In fact, when I left the café, he offered to accompany me on a walk through the park, because, so he said, his own experience might be of interest to me.

After a few moments of silence, I asked him: "You seem to be very much interested in music?"

"Yes and no," he answered, and continued laughingly: "Oh! I see. You asked that question because I am a rather conspicuous figure at concerts with my pad and pencil. Well, it is this way. Music as music leaves me utterly indifferent. It attracts me for a totally different reason, and exactly there *you* enter with your anecdote of the pink passage.



"Every man of culture has the natural desire to acquaint himself with the master works of music, just as he will visit art galleries or attend lectures on Mendel or on the attempted conquests of the North Pole. Now I must tell you that I am a scientist by profession. My particular hobby is biological chemistry. For many years I have been experimenting with certain theories of my own on various biological processes. The details will not interest you. Suffice it to say that these theories, if correct, will upset previous conceptions of the subject entirely and will revolutionize human society. Incidentally the name of Cyrus Kluckhuhn will become immortal for all time. I know intuitively that my theories are correct, but it behooves me to prove their correctness before exposing myself to the ridicule and scorn of fellow-scientists. The underlying principle is simplicity itself, but the process of reasoning the thing out with the innumerable laboratory experiments before and after each step was painfully slow, very complicated, and it involved a great mental strain.

"I have largely to thank the art of music for what I have accomplished so far, for I discovered that music stimulated the activity of my brain, without otherwise affecting me either mentally or emotionally. From that time on I began to frequent concerts and opera, with pad and pencil ever ready to record the workings of my mind. Generally nothing would happen, but quite frequently the sound of music affected my thinking apparatus by way of subconscious association in such a manner that biological ideas tumbled forth in orderly sequence. Indeed, even long-sought-for chemical formulas would be lured by the sound of music on the mental screen as in a vision. For my purpose it was immaterial who played or what was played. I have sat through many a concert, like a hunter waiting for his prey, without the faintest idea of what was being played. Indeed, since I was attending to business in my capacity as biological chemist, I could not afford to take any but a passive interest in music as music.

"This was my strict rule, but every rule has its exceptions. The great sorrow of my life, my "Knacks" as German students say, dates from the only notable exception made by me during a career of almost ten years as biological melomaniac.

"Under the influence of these hypodermic injections of music, my *magnum opus* had progressed to a point where but one link was missing to make the chain of deductions complete and to put the name of Cyrus Kluckhuhn permanently on the map of the scientific world. Try as I might, that triumphant last link would not form itself in my mind. Music seemed no longer to have charms to

lure the one chemical formula I still needed into visible existence. Then Anton Rubinstein came to town on his last concert tour. Acting on the idea that genius begets genius, I, as a matter of course and with revived hopes, went to his concert. Mind you, as a biologist, not as a musical enthusiast, but before five minutes had passed, his playing had driven from my mind all interest in biology. For the first time in my life I was under the spell of music as music. Even his obviously wrong notes—fairly frequent at the end of his career, so a pianist friend had informed me—seemed to fit into the scheme of things “true, beautiful and good,” as he poured forth their very essence. So spellbound was I, that I did not make the slightest effort to record on my pad the biological “photisms” as they came dancing on my mental screen. I sat and listened and joined the audience in its frantic desire for an encore. Rubinstein granted it and then, while I was completely off my guard, the unexpected—or, shall I say, the expected?—happened. Rubinstein came down on the keyboard with a mighty chord. As if released by a spring, there shot before my eyes that formula for which I would have gladly sold my soul. In the shock of my excitement I dropped my pencil and with fiendish glee it rolled under the feet of the lady occupying the chair in front of me. Without scandalizing my neighbors, I could not very well dive under the chair to rescue my only means of recording the formula on which the future happiness of millions and my own reputation depended. I should have cast all conventionality to the winds, but I had not the moral strength so to do. As if to enable me to chisel it into my memory, the formula remained like a bold inscription before my eyes for many seconds. With an agonizing effort I tried to remember it, complicated as it was, but my mind unfortunately was too much in the bondage of Rubinstein. He cast his spell anew over me, the formula vanished just as suddenly as it had appeared, and my weird hope that the same chord might reappear and with it the formula was not fulfilled.

“Indeed, it has not been fulfilled to this day, though I went about the task of forcing that chord back into my life pretty thoroughly, I assure you. First of all, I consulted critics and pianists. Without avail. They could not identify the piece. Then I dispatched a letter of inquiry to Rubinstein himself. The postal authorities apparently were not satisfied with the address, for the letter was returned after many wanderings with the official remark: “Addressee unknown.” I re-addressed the letter, this time giving Rubinstein his dues—on which, so I am told, he did not lay stress in private life—as “His Excellency, Counselor of State,

Anton von Rubinstein." After a few weeks I received from him a brief note merely stating that the piece in question was by a talented young composer and that it ought to be in the repertoire of every art-respecting pianist. Voilà tout. The identity of the young composer he did not disclose. It must have been one of the very last letters penned by Rubinstein, for on the day after its receipt I read the telegraphic news of his death.

"There I was, not much wiser than before. However, Rubinstein's exasperating note contained a clue. If the piece played by him as an encore, in his opinion, should be in the repertoire of every art-respecting pianist, it certainly was not an improvisation by Rubinstein, but was a piece accessible in print. Consequently I argued that sooner or later I must run across it, if I made it my business to attend every piano recital offered wherever I happened to be. This I have done assiduously, but, strange to say, so far the mysterious young composer alluded to by Rubinstein has not found favor with innumerable pianists whose concerts I have attended. At any rate, not one of them appears to have included that beautiful piece in his public repertoire, and the pieces played by them certainly do not contain that chord, on which so much depends for me and, I may add, for the world at large. Still, I have not relinquished hope. Some day I shall hear that piece again and in it the chord which will inspire me to finish my *magnum opus*. Without that miserable chord the progress of the human race will be retarded, I fear, forever. A sorry spectacle indeed to thus see science at the mercy of such a stupid thing as music is, after all. A Cyrus Kluckhuhn slave to the whim of some wire-strumming idiot! Why, it is enough to make the cows of Hindustan weep with shame."

He stopped abruptly, and after a few words of conventional conversation we parted. Shortly afterwards I left Munich, not to visit the city again for several years. Just when I left the station, Kluckhuhn rushed by me to catch an outgoing train. To my jocular question "Still at it?" he answered on the run over his shoulder, "Still at it." Again a few years passed before I met him. He had the appearance of a man resigned to fate and I was prepared for what he said to me when we had taken refuge in his favorite café:

"My case is hopeless. I have given up the quest of the chord and with it all hope of ever finishing my work. I have sat through innumerable recitals of innumerable pianists everywhere, in Germany, in France, in England. I have impaired my health and I have impaired my fortune gambling with luck. From pianists' programs

nobody could possibly appreciate the fact that a huge mass of piano music is published annually. Can it be, I wonder, that incredibly little of it is worth hearing? At any rate, there is a sameness about the programs of pianists which practically excludes the possibility of my ever hearing that Sesame-chord again. I have heard the collective repertoire of pianists so many times that I have come to know beforehand within ten per cent what this or that pianist will play. Indeed, ninety per cent of the pieces appear to be common stock in trade of the whole tribe. Of the other ten per cent, at least fifty per cent seem to be chosen for no other reason except that this or that famous pianist has been successful with a given piece and that it pays to imitate him. The selection of the remainder, however, really seems to be due to the earnest desire of a few adventurous souls to pave the way for neglected and unknown works of merit. Of course, I am exaggerating, but at least I can prove this thesis, that the more famous a pianist is, as a rule, the more conventional his average program will be. Against such frightful odds, biology and its disciple, Cyrus Kluckhuhn, cannot battle. The cold, cruel fact remains that not one of your piano athletes has been helpful to me, in all these years. Let a pianist play Kluckhuhn's chord to me and the world shall have Kluckhuhn's biological formula. But, great as is my devotion to science, I certainly shall not continue to make my life unbearable by chasing after that troublesome chord. Do you blame me?"

I shook my head and by way of further argument I started to say: "A most interesting case of 'privileged association,' that of yours, and what an enviable experience to have heard the collective repertoire of living pianists so many times."

Just then an acquaintance of Cyrus Kluckhuhn stepped to our table and I never had occasion to finish my argument in Kluckhuhn's presence. It ran to the best of my recollection like this:

"You argue that the collective repertoire of living pianists does not contain the beautiful piece by that mysterious young composer, now probably in his prime or past his prime, which, according to Rubinstein, should be in the repertoire of every pianist. It may be true that incredibly much music for the pianoforte is published and incredibly little of it finds its way into a pianist's program, but, on the other hand, no pianist will admit, I fancy, that such a piece could have remained in obscurity. If it did remain in obscurity, then every pianist will argue that its fate was deserved—Rubinstein's catholic taste and categoric dictum notwithstanding. You see, pianists know that the public is the

ultimate judge in such matters. Hence, they are very cautious about playing anything not previously approved by the public. *Matinée* idols naturally shrink from the rudeness of disturbing the mental equilibrium of their audience by playing a piece which their customers might not know whether to applaud or not, before they have read the weather reports of the critics. It may be that a pianist approves of a given piece in his studio, but why should he play it in public, if he is not absolutely sure that the public will applaud the selection? It is so much more important that the public become familiar with the slight differences of interpretation of the same piece by different masters of the keyboard than that it should learn the differences between the art of many different masters of composition. Since the public in music, as at horse races, 'plays favorites,' common sense demands to play favorites in public. There is always time enough to include novelties in one's programs after other and less sensible pianists have tried them successfully on their audiences. The greater the pianist, the more sacred and the more convenient his duty to concentrate his activity on the preservation of established master works and not weaken his educational influence or blur the public's mental horizon by paving the way incidentally for struggling composers of talent. That may have been reasonable, dignified and just in Liszt's days, but conditions have changed and "*quod licebat Jovi, non licet bubus.*" To-day, it is sufficient to be the apostle of the past, not also the champion of the present nor the prophet of the future. Liszt's *bon-mot* '*génie oblige*' does not apply to the modern pianist with his wholly different problems in this commercial age of ours. At least, so I have been told.

"As to that particular piece, evidently Rubinstein, with his repertoire of some twelve hundred pieces, was mistaken in his judgment of the merits of the piece, and, like Napoleon, the more modern pianist can no longer afford to make mistakes. Moreover, it is a dogma that, barring Chopin, Schumann, Brahms, Liszt, Rubinstein, Debussy and four or five others, nobody has composed anything worth while for the piano, Bach of course excepted, who should always be played to keep up appearances. Such dogmas are final and their correctness should not be questioned by either Catholics, Protestants or Jews. To superimpose on the modern pianist with his worries incidental to travel and to the high cost of living, the duty to dig for gold-nuggets in the printed sands of mediocrity, when he knows beforehand by way of dogma that he cannot or should not find any gold, would be unreasonable: life is too long and the concert season is too short.

"So much for this matter and in defence of pianists in general. Now, that piece exists, of course, but I have come to believe that 'Kluckhuhn's chord,' as you yourself have called it, does not exist. Is it not just barely possible that the composer wrote a chord different from the one played by Rubinstein? Is it not just barely possible that your chord with its wonderful possibilities for the human race was an accident, the mere result of Rubinstein's frequent 'daneben hauen'? In that case the hunt for it at piano recitals would be utterly useless, even if other pianists should risk the inclusion of the piece in their repertoires. I would therefore advise you to abandon piano recitals and try your luck at other shrines. Why not, after your disheartening experience with pianists, seek the necessary inspiration for 'Kluckhuhn's biological formula' at violin and song recitals, against which the charge of cowardice of programs, of the safe 'playing favorites,' of approved staleness and sameness has never been preferred by any sane and self-respecting critic?"

I must add in conclusion that my argument did not come with the inspiration of the moment. It had been prepared long ago in anticipation of a further meeting with Kluckhuhn. My idea was, if possible, to persuade him by some plausible argument to stop brooding over his chord, for I feared that otherwise his great mind might collapse, to the detriment of biology. Hence my suggestion of the genesis of Kluckhuhn's chord by sheer accident. A forced theory, perhaps, but at least pianists will appreciate its correctness.



## PERCY GRAINGER THE MUSIC AND THE MAN

By CYRIL SCOTT

**A**LTHOUGH Percy Grainger is a pianist of very great powers, it is not with that more ephemeral side of his personality that I intend to deal in this study, but with that part of his creative genius which, I have no hesitation in saying at the outset, will leave an imperishable name in the history of English music. My friendship with Percy Grainger covers a period now verging on twenty years, and thus I have followed his development and watched the growth of his personal and musical soul almost from its commencement, at any rate in this incarnation. Already at the age of thirteen Grainger was composing works for the pianoforte in a style which distinctly flavoured of Handel, for it is a note-worthy fact that as the human embryo goes through all the stages of pre-human evolution before it becomes Man, so does the creative talent go through the styles of the old masters before arriving at modernity and its own individuality. There may be exceptions to this in the domains of music and art, but certainly the exceptions are not so many as to nullify the tendency.

Percy Grainger studied at Frankfort-on-the-Main when the Hoch Conservatoire was one of the finest musical educational institutions in Europe. Among its staff were to be found the celebrities of the day—Hugo Heermann, that incomparable violinist, Hugo Becker the cellist of fame, Frau Schroeder-Hanfstaengel, the prima donna, and the equally famous teachers, James Kwast for the piano, and Iwan Knorr who has launched so many composers forth into the world. Strange to say, however, though Grainger learnt much in his pianistic art from Kwast, yet with Iwan Knorr he could not be said to “get on,” and apart from a certain grounding in harmony and counterpoint, he never availed himself of that master’s valuable criticism in purely compositional matters. From the first, Grainger elected to go his own way, and to be guided by his intuitions rather than the suggestions of a teacher, and I think he never really understood Knorr, nor did Knorr really understand him. In fact, there is a certain type of embryonic genius that is impatient of any species

of restraint, and prefers to blunder along many wrong roads independently than be led along the right one by a masterful hand. And Percy Grainger is not so very exceptional in this respect, for one of Germany's greatest living painters, Melchior Lechter, showed this same characteristic, when he remarked, "I have never learnt anything of much value from my masters; I found out everything for myself." Grainger, then, did not trouble to learn the rules (as most of us do), in order to know how to break them—he merely broke them from the beginning. Swerving away very soon from his Handelian tendencies he began to show a harmonic modernism which was astounding in so young a boy, and at times excruciating to our pre-Debussy ears. And strange to say, he began writing in a whole-tone scale without knowing of Debussy's existence. At sixteen years of age, he had, in fact, developed a style, and that style was the outcome of a discovery, and a literary discovery, not a musical one; for he had discovered Rudyard Kipling, and from that writer he imbibed an essence and translated it into music.

Those who know well the life of Robert Schumann will remember the influence that genius of vision, Jean Paul Friedrich Richter, exercised upon his musical personality. It would be hard indeed to be able to trace from what *musical* fountain Schumann imbibed his style, and one is constrained to feel that if Jean Paul had never existed, never could there have been a Schumann as we see him to-day, or even a Schumann at all. And that same question undoubtedly applies to Percy Grainger and Kipling; although in reality the question is vain. For Chance is only that phantom outlet by which certain difficulty-involved scientists attempt to emerge from the rucks of their dilemma, but for a philosopher the word hardly exists. We may take it, then, that there is an artistic link between two souls, and as much the outcome of a self-made destiny, *i. e.*, the law of sequence and consequence, as there are links of hatred and love: and that great law destined Kipling and Grainger to exist on the material plane at the same time. Now, one notes that it is only a great artist who can draw his influence from another art instead of his own. A small composer is usually influenced by a greater composer whom he copies with an admixture of an unpleasantly tasting honey; a sweetness which is the invariable concomitant of weakness. But it was not in the nature of Grainger's talents to do this except at the very babyhood of his musical awakening, and in finding Kipling he found also *himself*; or I should add, at any rate a great part of himself. Certainly the best music he produced

at that early period was to be found among his settings of that famous writer, and one song, "The Men of the Sea," stands out as a gem which the dust of a good many eventful years has not succeeded in tarnishing. It is, of course, obvious that where the writer and the composer were so unified, a perfect work of art was the result, and from that beginning up to the present time whenever Grainger elects to produce one of his Kipling's settings, be it song or chorus, he *becomes* Kipling in a manner which nobody else in the musical arena can approach.

The present age is the age of harmonic invention. As in Bach's time polyphony was the great characteristic of serious music, and in Beethoven's day formal structure, the present day shows an advance in harmony—beginning with Wagner—which is likely to extend into possibilities of which few can dream at the moment. But harmony is not all that the present has to dole to us, for there is slowly appearing in our midst a great revolution in musical rhythm. Now, although Grainger had never heard a note from the pen of Scriabine, yet at the age of seventeen he had great schemes of entirely revolutionizing the existent laws of rhythm, which he demonstrated in a setting of the Song of Solomon, hidden away now among his many unpublished works. We are in hopes that one day he will rework this really beautiful beginning to his creations in the field of irregular rhythm, for it was filled with a melodic and Eastern sensuousness, truly captivating, though the harmonic invention does not show this really great harmonist at the summit of his inspiration.

From what has been said, it is self-evident that Grainger is not one of those individualist talents that begin, as it were, very modestly and only evolve their full style at the noontide of their lives. Not like either Wagner or Beethoven was Grainger in this respect. At the age when Wagner was writing offensively like Meyerbeer, Grainger was already writing like himself, and this being so, it does not appear quite so strange as it might, that he is able to dive into his greatly loaded coffers of manuscripts and restart working upon some composition he has commenced many years previously. He possesses, in fact, countless sketches of works he intends to finish, and unlike most composers, he does not find himself in the dilemma of having wandered so far afield from the road of his original inspiration as to be quite unable to find his way back again. In one sense, therefore, he is not an evolving artist, but one who branches out more than actually grows; hence he offers a psychological study of a most unusual character. Unlike other composers one cannot listen to one of

his works and reflect, "This came from his early period, and this comes from his later one": and whatever the subtle difference may be to Grainger himself, one feels that such a thing as "Mock Morris" or "Handel in the Strand" might as well have been written at seventeen as at twenty-eight. With him it seems not to be a question of age but purely a question of mood: and we, his friends, are anxiously awaiting the day when the mood will take him to complete those more serious sketches—the "Bush Music" and the "Train Music" (strange titles which I shall deal with later) for these are the beginnings of what promise to be very great works.

That the folk-song should appeal to Percy Grainger in the way it does is not a matter for surprise, considering the Kipling influence, but it has undoubtedly led the public to make a false estimate of Grainger's powers as an original composer. And this has been much augmented by the large preponderance of folk-song settings which have grown popular among his published works. Now, a man nearly always becomes celebrated by his lightest and most frivolous and most easily understandable works: this may be a tragic fact to the composer himself, but a fact it remains, all the same, and a very obvious one, too. And Grainger has certainly become a victim to this trait in the public's mentality; for having given the public a few "light" works, it at once supposes that he can write nothing but "light" works. It is, therefore, one of the objects of this article to dispel that entirely false notion, for certainly the "Hill Song" for wind instruments, "The English Dance" for full orchestra, the "Father and Daughter" for male quartett, chorus and orchestra, including a number of guitars, are works of paramount seriousness displaying an inspiration and a technique which awakened, in many of us, one of the greatest musical sensations we have had for many a long year. But it must not be supposed that in talking of seriousness one implies anything which could for a moment suggest dullness or the academic. Grainger is anything but classical; he is not, like Max Reger, a sort of elongation of Brahms;—indeed this goes without saying, but one may add with truthfulness that he is not an elongation of anything: but the essence of folk-song augmented to a great work of art. Even when he keeps the folk-songs almost within their original dimensions he has a way of dealing with them which is entirely new, yet at the same time, never lacking in taste. What a gem does the old song "Willow, Willow" become when transformed by this musical alchemy; also the plaintive "Died for love," a masterpiece of mood, and old world

poeticalness. And to mention another "Fancy" of supreme beauty, "My Robin has to the greenwood gone," in this dream of charm Grainger has taken but one little phrase and instead of "working" it as most composers would have done, he has *continued* it after his own fancy and exhibited a novel method of phrase-treatment which no doubt will prove an inspired suggestion to many followers.

That Grainger is a choral writer of exceptional power, those people who know his works at all are aware, but here again they are liable to overlook his lengthier works in that direction such as "King Olaf" and others. Grainger has, in fact, a choral technique which only the initiated can divine, for he manages to draw effects from a chorus which have remained latent heretofore, and the choral writers that will come after his day will owe him a debt in the field of technique.

I have already said that Grainger presents a psychological study of great interest, and I will now pass on to those traits in the man which are so closely interwoven with his music and account for much that might be easily misunderstood. To begin with, as a soul-type, Grainger is obviously a Northerner, saturated with the influence of a previous Northern incarnation. His entire appearance is replete with this idea, and his love for Northern folk-song, Northern languages, authors and the people themselves, point to something for which alone the doctrine of reincarnation can furnish a rational explanation. From the spirit of force, physical and otherwise, Grainger has derived a deep inspiration, and I can remember with what child-like glee he watched three perspiring men trying to lift a piano round the bend of a poky little back staircase on a phenomenally hot July day—for it is from the aggregate of such small incidents that one gains so much insight into a person's soul. He has, in fact, for an artist, in him a most strange spirit of athleticism, and when ever circumstances allow (and sometimes when they do not allow) he will run or jump, when other persons would be walking, and make the ordinary things of life, such as opening a door, into athletic feats by trying to turn the handle with his foot. In short, the viking having no longer difficult crags to climb, it would seem that he is compelled to make difficulties to let off the steam of that viking spirit transported into the present century. But this athleticism does not stop here, it flaunts itself in places where it is strangely out of place and unblushingly becomes nothing else but extremely vulgar. For, to the despair of his eminently refined and much respected publishers, Messrs. Schott & Co.,

Grainger insists on filling his catalogues and musical works, not only with golfing expressions but also with culinary phrases, so that his prospectus is a very masterpiece of slang and vulgarity, causing not a few people to dismiss him and his works as something not worthy of being taken seriously. Now, it is not difficult to understand that a certain type of athlete might entertain a dislike for the artistic, but that a musician should incline that way seems undoubtedly very strange. Nevertheless with Grainger this is certainly the case, and his dislike of the artistic brings him so far in the opposite direction as to end on the plane of vulgarity. Not only is his prospectus set forth in the manner stated, but the printing of his covers looks as if it ought to depict the words "To Let, furnished" rather than the title to some piece of music. One must not forget to add, however, that the titles themselves are thought out with a view to being the acme of anti-artisticness, and the climax to this species of title is a work still unpublished and called "The Arrival-platform Humlet," which means a tune one hums when standing on the station platform awaiting the arrival of the train.

Grainger, then, unblushingly likes vulgarity, and I wish to emphasize the fact, because when the obvious and the vulgar appear in his music at times, it is *not* because nothing better "occurs to him" (to use a foreign idiom) but because, as with Kipling, the vulgar evidently means to him a certain strength. The equivalent to such a line as "We stood upon the starboard, a-spittin' in the sea," gives to Percy Grainger seemingly the same sort of sensation of strength that a swear-word gives to Masfield, or some unpoetical part of the human body gives to Walt Whitman! It is also for this reason, obviously, that Grainger often selects words for his songs, which cause his female singers to be quite unable to preserve the normal tint of their cheeks when obliged to pronounce those words to an audience. I do not imply that the words are vulgar in the sense that Bessie Bellwood was, but simply that they are flavoured with that archiac tendency of calling a spade a spade which is no longer a habit of polite society, even if it ever were so.

Now, there are some, even among Grainger's admirers, who dismiss this side of his personality with the convenient word "pose," or regard it as one of those "kinks" in the brain so often to be found (they think) in people of talent. In short, to be different from anyone else or to like things different from those others like, this in the eyes of so many is at once to be unnatural and a poseur. But it is never in this frivolous manner that



psychology deals with the objects of its study, and it realizes full well that nobody is a greater poseur than the conventionalist and the pharisee. For as no two people in the world are exactly alike, having neither the same taste nor the same inclinations, to ape the actions and thoughts of others is at once to be unnatural and tinctured with posefulness. Indeed only he who goes along the road of his *own* tastes, desires and inclinations, is the real antithesis to a poseur; and for this reason the artist diverging from the majority in most things more than the ordinary person is liable to be regarded as unnatural, when in reality he is just the reverse. With Percy Grainger, therefore, it is not a question of being a poseur, but of not knowing when to pose at the right moment: of when to swerve aside from the road of his own inclinations. A man's creative individuality is the outcome of his admirations, but for general sense of fitness one wishes sometimes that Grainger would pose to the extent of occasionally hiding his admiration, lest he be too much misunderstood, and thus hinder the acceptance of his great gifts to the world of music. His admiration for detail, to give another example, although of great value when attached solely to the actual necessities of musical expression, leads him into displaying it when it can have no possible interest except for himself: and certainly when combined with his love of purely English words it reaches not only the plane of the *unessential* but very often also of the grotesque. A very casual contemplation of his musical directions would lead one to infer that the Italian language is not plain enough to gratify his taste for the straightforward and eminently practical, and that he feels constrained in order to ensure his being entirely understood to resort to the use of his own language; but on closer scrutiny one finds the whole case to be *vice-versa*, and that he is compelled to place Italian (in brackets) to explain the slangy obscurity of his English.

I have treated these "defects of his qualities" (if so one may call them) at some length, on account of the important part they play in the minds of those who come across a sheet of Percy Grainger's music for the first time; for, as already hinted, many and great misconceptions are often likely to ensue. To glance at some work of his and immediately perceive such words and phrases as "bumpingly" "louden lots" "hold till blown" "dished up for piano" and so forth, might excusably awaken the idea that Grainger is possessed of talent, but hardly possessed of manners. And yet such a reflection were absolutely untrue. For although he may take a delight in watching perspiring men lift heavy

pianos on hot summer days, he seems to take equal delight in behaving to the most polished perfection in the hot drawing-rooms of duchesses. Indeed his nature is of so great a loveliness that he can hardly be said to have an enemy, unless one could be found among those who never come into contact with him, and therefore can dislike him merely in theory. He seems to find, in fact, a place in the area of his interest for an astonishingly large diversity of human temperaments, and one feels that if it were not a social impossibility, he often would be disposed to invite among his more distinguished guests some road-mender or bus-conductor, who by the turn of a phrase or some particular form of cockney intonation had given him a moment of amusement. And it is this very large-heartedness, showing itself in his music, which gives that music such a large compass of appeal; for unlike most great talents, by the variety of his creations he can draw people to his musical heart, so to speak, whose own musicality is of the most meagre sort. In other words, Grainger appeals to the unmusical, just as Kipling appeals to the illiterate: unlike such men as Bach or Brahms he holds among the many things of his creative output "fancies" and quaint musical conceits which *everybody* can understand: and these special things are not written in order to please the public—a device to which Grainger would not descend—but because they are a certain obvious simple part of his childlike nature to which at times he feels he must give expression. There is also a very strong vein of a certain species of sentimentality in his character, which breathes through his melodies and touches at once the heart of the most "Simple Simon" of musical comprehension. For although Grainger has an intellect of which many a book-worm might be envious, it dwells side by side with a child-likeness charming as it is surprising. And this child-likeness manifests itself in a most sentimental attachment to things which appear to possess no value: such as highly and most offensively immature manuscripts of my own (I regret to say) which he hugs to his heart in a manner a child hugs a broken toy, merely because it is old and broken. I do not mention this fact, however, in order to work off some of my annoyance, in that I can never get back these tattered swaddling clothes of my musical infancy in order to destroy them, but because I imagine this trait in Grainger's character may have some connection with the fact that one sees so often on his own manuscripts such indications as, "Begun in 1900, ended in 1914." In other words, because of this trait of his, do these old ideals and youthful inspirations draw him back to them, so that he

must needs take them lovingly and bring them to completion after so many years? If it be so, one can only say that he succeeds where so many others fail.

In conclusion: contemplating Grainger's *entire* musical personality (for I would repeat this is essential) I see in him all those elements which make the "immortal artist." For he exists as something quite new in musical expressibility; he has invented new forms or considerably enlarged and transformed old ones; he is a great harmonic inventor, yet unlike Schoenberg he does not lead us into the excruciating. Furthermore, although at times he is a little too unafraid of the obvious, he is entirely consistent therein and one sees at once how little such a thing is the outcome of weakness. In addition to all these characteristics, he can equally show forth a poetry and pathos which speak in sublime dulcitude to the soul, and a rollicking liveliness which awakens energy almost in the limbs of the decrepit. Can one demand a more all-encompassing plane of emotions in one individuality than this? Truly it were difficult to find.

## THE AMERICAN-HUNGARIAN FOLK-SONG

By HELEN WARE

“**F**OR Ages has the Lord punished you oh Magyar” and yet the Hungarians are one of the greatest of the “singing people.” The Hungarian awakes with song and sings himself to sleep; song is his companion in work and misery, nay, even at burials the song plays a most important role.

In the grim struggle for existence the Hungarian race dropped somewhat behind its Western neighbors in the development of culture and sciences, but the primitive power of the race lies beneath the surface, and under favorable peaceful conditions this will help it to overtake its neighbors, who can thank the Hungarians partly for the long peaceful periods which made the handicap possible.

One cannot but admire their inclination for song, when one considers that but very little was inherited by later generations from the primitive poetry of the race. The early nomad tribes of Magyars were subjected to a compulsory missionary influence which went far toward extinguishing their keen appreciation of naïve but powerfully poetic instincts.

Notwithstanding this, here and there one can still find traces of this unique and forceful poetry in their later folk-songs, giving ample proof of the beautiful esthetic riches which were most common with these nomads.

As far back as historians point the way their forefathers sang their sorrows and joys in expressive folk-songs. The bloody wars that scourged the land annihilated almost every trace of these relics. It seems miraculous that with the omnipresent Teutonic influence the Hungarian language did not perish also.

The period which is known as the Kurucz Period in Hungarian history gives ample proof of the powers which prompt the Hungarians to sing their woes in melancholy haunting melodies. During the revolution of 1848 and later as a result of the occupation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, scores of military and camp songs were sung and handed down as a dearly cherished legacy for generations later.

In days of peace while the spinning wheel whirled merrily or when the spirit of dance moved them, songs were sung that were born on the spur of the moment.

No one knows where they came from or who the composer was—the Hungarian song is born like the dewdrop on the rose petal. . . .



During the past thirty years the immigration fever has lured the Hungarians away from their homes. At first they came singly, then in hundreds, thousands, and now in hundreds of thousands.

The Hungarian peasant left the peaceful plains with reminiscences of the soil which he had tilled year after year and the songs he had sung under the blue skies, and he exchanged it all for the dark coal mines and the smoky factory with its shrieking siren and throbbing machinery. Amidst this sudden change the singing Magyar became silent and morbid for the time being. His song was strange, it did not find its echo. The girl who waited for him at the iron-grated window amidst her favorite flowers, her he could not find here.

When he drowned his sorrow in song he missed the accompaniment which the gipsy, leaning over him, was wont to play. His pent-up emotions were expressed in fervent prayer in the Hungarian church, and if occasionally songs did then burst forth after long captivity, they were his favorites of old. No new melodies were born in his adopted country, a disappointing Canaan.

For many years students and lovers of Hungarian music vainly sought for the spark that would ignite the musical creative powers of the Hungarian immigrant. Though over a half million of them were scattered over the land, their slumbering love for melody did not seem to have found an awakening incentive.

It was not until the Hungarian poet George Kemény accidentally stumbled into a Hungarian inn in South Bend, Indiana, that anybody was in a position to record the birth of the Hungarian-American folk-song. A bottle or two of sparkling Hungarian wine in this place sealed his friendship with Ádám Pista, a man who was a relic of an age which had its bards and roaming fiddlers.

In his youth Ádám Pista was a fisherman on one of the Hungarian lakes. He emigrated to America a few years ago and never again attempted to earn his living from systematic work. His was the life of a roaming fiddler and ballad singer. They

welcomed him at every Hungarian Inn and "company shack," for he brought with him a breath of long ago.

The fiery Hungarian wine soon brought back to his memory many visions from his roamings across the land, and he sang of them in songs that were strange. For while the melodies bore all the characteristic traits of the Hungarian folk-songs, the verses were of new subjects, entirely foreign to the usual Hungarian lyrics.

Kemény, the poet, pricked up his ears and listened in amazement to the spirited singer. If ever there was an Hungarian-American folk-song, surely here was living proof of the Hungarian peasants' musical resurrection.

But Ádám Pista could not realize why this new comrade of his was so anxiously jotting down the words of his strange collection of songs.

Were it but possible to translate the lyrics, without transferring the naïve and crude, yet powerful poetry of these verses, into English or any other tongue, without clothing what is ideal in a ridiculous garb!

First he sang of the parting from his dear ones and the great steamer with its numberless pigeon holes. On the rough seas he prays to Father Neptune to save him, and never again will he leave the little village with its fragrant perfumes of the acacia trees blooming twice a year.

Then his song takes a cynical tint and in terse verses we hear of the change of appearance due to the new clothes he donned:

The skies will split  
And Stars will cry  
Because you have donned Oh Magyar  
Such ridiculous garb, etc.

They dressed me up in wide, wide pants  
And such broad shoes that I can slide in them  
From right to left or wherever I choose.

#### The new clothes he donned

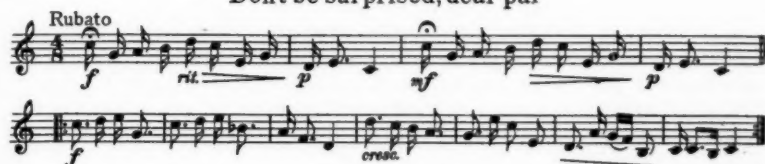




Another clink of the wine glasses strikes a sad chord in his heart, for in his next song he complains of his new mode of life:

Don't be surprised dear pal that you find me so pale  
 Alas nine years have I been grinding  
 Steel in Albers (Oliver) great shops.  
 I grind and grind and grind the steel plows for the American farmers.

Don't be surprised, dear pal



Thus does the peasant express his bitterness against Fate which robbed him of the blue sky and the dear black soil which was so grateful for his toil.

It is possible that part of the above songs were born in Ádám Pista's poetic soul, but it is more likely that he collected them in his travels and sang them again as the spirit moved him.

Inasmuch as we have no record of any other bard of Ádám Pista's type, his alone is the honor of being the roaming singer-apostle of the Hungarian-American.

It is remarkable that his narrating abilities were next to nil, and even when singing his verses he had to repeat some several times before he conveyed his message clearly.

There have been numerous attempts made by Kemény to enrich his Ádám Pista collection with others from different parts of America, but his efforts have borne little fruit. The Hungarian can only *sing* his verses; one rarely hears them recited, and still less often do we find traces of them in writing or print.

In the Hungarian-American folk-song we find traces of the keen disappointment which the immigrant feels on his arrival in the Castle Garden Immigration bureau. The strange language, unheard-of customs, callous treatment and ever-present uncertainty, are expressed in sad stanzas.

Of all his sentiments his longing for the old country and his fireside seem to furnish most of the themes for his new songs.

White raven, oh white raven,  
 How long since I last saw you,  
 Have you met my sweetheart somewhere?  
 "That I did at the New York depot  
 Buying his ticket home to go."

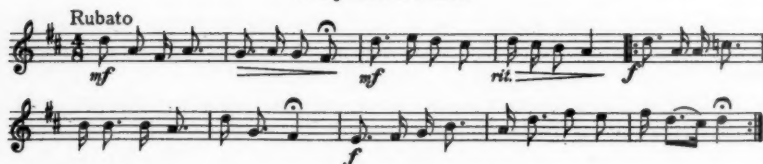
From New York the great steamer departs,  
 Sadness rules in a thousand hearts,  
 Silken flag floats merrily from its mast,  
 Forever I leave you America at last.

Captain guide your ship with steady hands,  
 Take the right direction for Hungary,  
 There await me the youngsters and faithful wife  
 For whom I've risked all that's good in life.

Similar is the message of the song in which he tells of his efforts to get back home, but "Great sea surrounds this land wherever I go," "And so onward I roam. . . onward I roam." Then in bitter words he reproaches himself in a recitativo melody. The sentences are short but stinging, and throughout the entire song he calls his punishment just, for

Why did I come  
 If not for cursed gold!  
 No judge's sentence  
 Compelled me to flee,  
 Nor was it evil saying that pursued me;  
 Just gold, shining gold  
 Did I want to see. . . .

#### Why did I come



The above lines contain the explanation of the great tidal waves of immigration, for the Hungarian is never so frank and truthful as in his songs.

His undying love for the "Old Country" is commemorated in several songs. In one of them he expresses his faithfulness through an oath:

While this world remains a world  
 And birds sing their songs of love,  
 Whether alive or resting in strange soil  
 I'm true to you, oh Fatherland, I will ever be true.

As a great lover of Nature he is forever turning to her with all his sorrows and joys. He thus expresses his love for the faithful wife he left behind:

Stop, oh cloud, you dark black cloud,  
And send below a drop or two.  
Perhaps they are the tears she dropped;  
Perhaps they'll cure my aching heart.

His sentiments are just the opposite in the following song which cries of the unfaithful one:

On the shores of this distant land  
Friskily alights a peacock;  
Mail did she bring for many of us  
Flying from far-off Magyar land.

Others she brought jolly good news  
But my letter is a sad one.  
There it's written my wife is untrue  
She hath another she calls "dear one."

Graceful good bird how can it be  
That you brought me such sad news?  
"It's nothing more or less dear brother  
But that your wife lives with another."

The young Hungarian-American who had no wife and family to leave behind, also bemoans his fate, telling in poetic lines that his bride like so many other Hungarian girls is withering in the Oakdale cork factory

Where the sun beats down mercilessly  
On the tin roof overhead.

There are a number of songs in which we learn of the sad fate that awaits hundreds of the Hungarian miners in the dark bowels of the earth. One of them especially, thrills with its truly pathetic message telling of a buxom maiden who was wont to peep out of the window when the sun set to see her lover return from the mines. In the last stanza we hear:

Alas, you can wait forever  
He'll return never. . . never.

A jovial little song expresses the independence of the young chap who "digs black diamonds from the deep dark earth." He sings of his independence and for the first time in his life uses the word "strike" as a subject for his song.

The lack of outdoor work has robbed the Hungarian of the elements and riches of nature that abounded out on the green fields and pastures where he had spent most of his time. To any

one who knows their original folk-songs it seems very "foreign" to hear him sing about factories, mines, strikes, and machinery, in other words, the new elements that are absorbing his attention during his stay in this land.

Fortunately many of the Hungarian immigrants in Canada continue their agricultural work. In the following song we learn of the longing of one of these Canadian-Hungarian farmers. He pines for the scenes that he misses here, for the old cronies, for the customs of his fatherland. He sells his farm and returns to Hungary. His happiness is short-lived after his return, for he soon finds that the taxes are a greater burden than ever. The wide class distinction is also not to his liking, so

He takes his staff  
And little wordly riches;  
Crosses the wide ocean  
And digs new rows of ditches.

The above songs are all of a more or less melancholy strain for they express his keen disappointments and utter disillusiones, but in the following songs we behold the Hungarian immigrant in his old jovial mood amidst fellow sufferers and jingling wine glasses.

The background of most of these jovial songs is of course the Hungarian saloon or primitive boarding house.

The Hungarian peasant, who as a rule is a very honest man, learns from sad experience that he must use discretion in choosing those whom he will trust in his new country, therefore he sings

America is the land of plenty and pure gold,  
Fried pigeons fly into one's mouth I'm told,  
Tell your tales my good man, just go on,  
I'll get the best of you yet bye and bye.

There are a number of songs which furnish fascinating study to those who can appreciate the new words and phrases coined by the Hungarian immigrant, but in translating them even into prose, all of that which gives them their peculiar charm is lost.

They sing songs of despair and gloom, expressing their sorrows and disappointments, and yet most of the Hungarian-American immigrants become eternal wanderers, for after a long sojourn in America they never feel satisfied with conditions in the old country. If the old folks do succeed in making peace with conditions at home, it is certain that their American-born children will soon compel them to pack and return to the United

States. Their pathetic fate is touchingly portrayed in songs telling these sad tales.

There are numerous songs in the repertoire of the Hungarian-American peasant which are peppered so strongly that no printer's ink could carry the spice.

After all is said there is much that is crude in this simple human being. He is a rough diamond. Should a bit of mud cling to the precious stone in its process of formation that would surely give us no cause to toss it aside. So it is with the Hungarian peasant. He furnishes wonderfully pliable human material. His songs even in their most primitive form express a certain amount of beautiful sentiment in which there is no trace of artificiality or seeking for effect. Under favorable circumstances, with the guidance of a sympathetic hand, this human material would produce wonderful results.

If but in this great country of ours strong hands and gentle hearts would make the Hungarian immigrant's cause their own, and preserve in his sensitive soul those eloquent poetic powers which would eventually help to enrich our land with the sunshine of his soul and with new and as yet unborn songs of his heart, then, to use Mr. Kemény's words, "the Hungarian's Song will not be forever sad and weeping as it has been in ages gone by. From the very, very beginning."

## HENRY PURCELL—A SKETCH OF A BUSY LIFE

By PERCY A. SCHOLES

**B**ETWEEN the family of the Purcells in England and the contemporary family of the Bachs in Germany an interesting parallel may readily be drawn. Both families were intensely musical, and in both cases the period of musical activity extended over several generations. In the case of the Bachs this activity lasted for more than two centuries, in that of the Purcells for about one-and-a-half. Henry Purcell, like John Sebastian Bach, was but the climactic point in the artistic evolution of his line. The fire of genius began to glow in the generation of his father and uncle, it shot up to incredible heights in that of himself and his brother and sank slowly in those of his son and his grandson; in the fifth generation it was extinct. The Purcells, like the Bachs, were a galaxy of stars, but in each case the brilliance of a bright, particular star has paled the others into insignificance.

It was at an historic moment that Purcell was born. Cromwell was just dead: Charles II had not yet landed. The circumstance of the appearance of the greatest British musician at the turn of the political tide is of importance. Much of his work was to be done within the walls of the re-born national church or in the service of the restored Royal Family: as for his connection with the theatrical life of the Capital, though this would not have been impossible under the conditions of the later Protectorate, it could hardly have been so important a feature of his musical and professional life as it actually became.

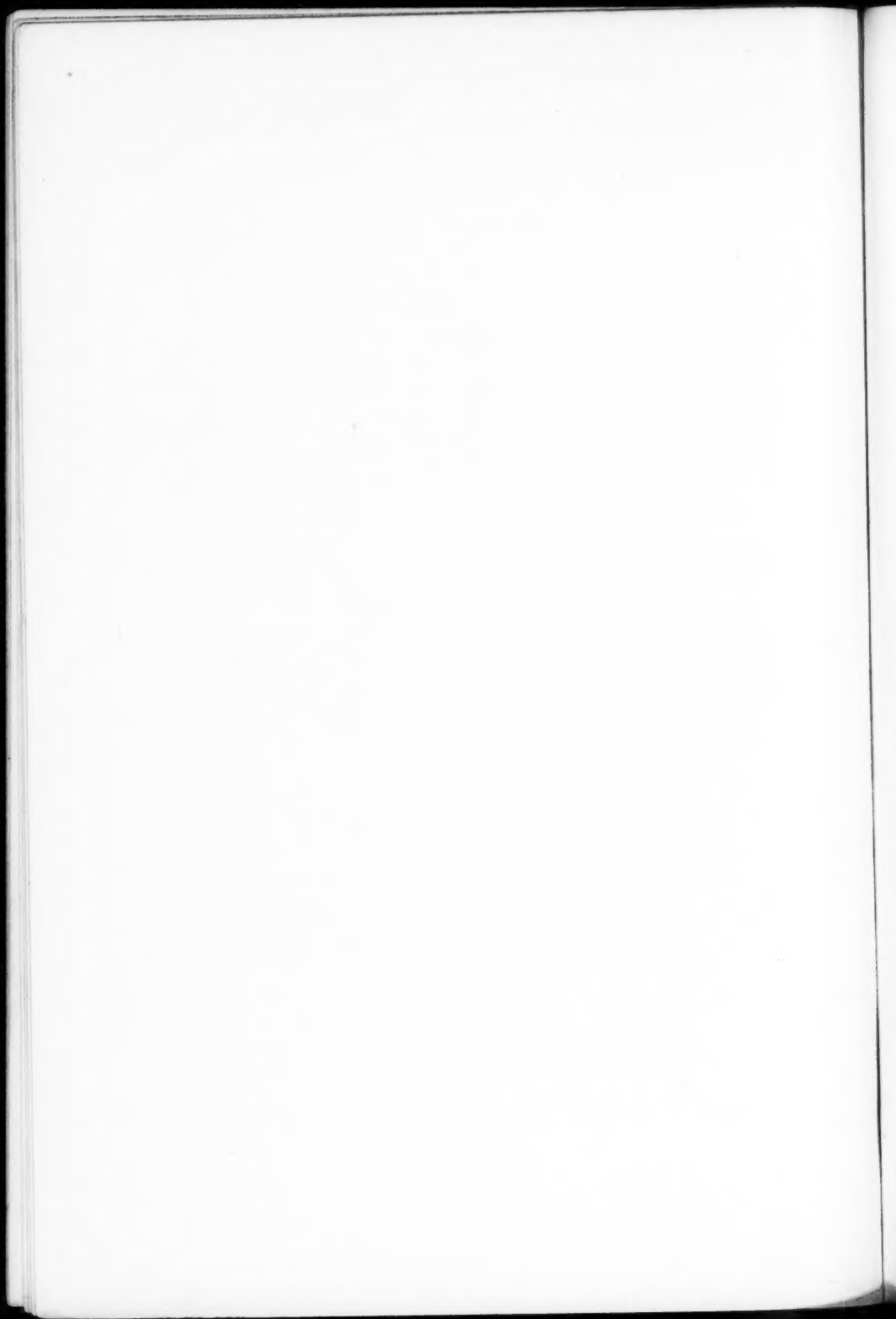
There is some discussion as to the actual date and place of Purcell's birth. The tombstone merely records that he died in his thirty-seventh year and this leaves the possibility of any date between November 21st 1658 and November 20th 1659. As he is said to have lost his father before he was six years of age, and as this event took place on August 11th, 1664, the period of doubt is a little further curtailed, and has as its limits November 21st 1658, on the one hand, and August 11th 1659, on the other. After all it is a period of less than nine months that is in question and the matter is one which must always interest the antiquary rather than the musician.





PHOTO BY EMERY WALKER, LONDON

Clostermann's portrait of Henry Purcell  
in the National Portrait Gallery, London



As regards the place of birth, this has been given as Little St. Ann's Lane, Pye Street, Westminster. Here again doubt has been expressed and, here again, the general reader may be spared discussion.<sup>1</sup> Neither the Lane nor the Street mentioned will now be found in the London Directory, but the actual house to which the event was traditionally assigned was in part still standing a few years ago and in the late Dr. Cumming's valuable pioneer work on the composer, published some years ago, is to be seen a drawing of it as it appeared in 1845.

The genial Pepys, after a morning in Westminster Hall on a certain Tuesday of February 1660, a morning spent in watching the excitement of the re-admission of the excluded Members of Parliament and the consequent reconstruction of the Long Parliament, went to dinner with one of the Members. In the afternoon he was back again in the Hall and here he met two friends, drawn like himself by a desire for sightseeing. Let him tell the story in his own words:—

Here I met with Mr. Lock and Pursell, Master of Musique, and went with them to the Coffee House, into a room next the water, by ourselves, where we spent an hour or two till Captain Taylor came and told us, that the House had voted the gates of the City to be made up again, and the members of the City that are in prison to be set at liberty; and that Sir G. Booth's case be brought into the House to-morrow. Here we had variety of brave Italian and Spanish songs, and a canon for eight voices, which Mr. Lock had lately made on these words: "Domine salvum fac Regem." Here out of the windows it was a most pleasant sight to see the City from one end to the other with a glory about it, so high was the light of the bonfires, and so thick round the City, and the bells rang everywhere.

Leaving some of the allusions to be explained by the reader's own recollections of the history of the country at this crisis in her affairs the important point is that here we meet with the first reference to Purcell's father. The events of the day of this friendly meeting were of great importance to him and to his family, and the rejoicings by bell and by bonfire may well have awakened a response in his heart, for the coming Restoration thus celebrated in advance by the populace at large and in a special way by this little party of musical friends, meant congenial and not unprofitable employment for himself and his brother Thomas, and also, at a later date, for the child at home, then only a few months old.

<sup>1</sup>Sir Frederick Bridge cast suspicion on the legend in the *Musical Times* of November 1895.

The "Master of Musique," as Pepys styles him, was, like his son, named Henry Purcell. His date of birth is unknown, but he died only four-and-a-half years after the incident just mentioned. He had been an actor and singer in Davenant's opera *The Siege of Rhodes* a few years before; henceforward, for the few remaining years of his life, he was to be occupied as a member of the choir of Westminster Abbey and as a Gentleman of the Chapel Royal. On the occasion of the coronation of Charles II, he received, like his colleagues, four yards of scarlet cloth for a gown and he must have made a brave appearance in the choir stalls thus gaily attired. In addition to holding the offices mentioned he became master of the choir boys of the Abbey and music copyist there, living in Great Almonry South, under the shadow of the Abbey. This last position was one of importance at a time when so little printed music existed, and the destruction of the music books which had taken place during the Commonwealth must have provided abundance of occupation during the period during which Henry Purcell, senior, held office. In the year before his death, he added to his activities that of member of the Royal band, and, in one way and another, it may be imagined his days were pretty well filled. It is of interest to observe his friendship with Matthew Locke, who, also, had sung in *The Siege of Rhodes*; it was he who composed the music for "ye king's sagbutts and cornets," played during the royal progress from the Tower to Whitehall, the day before the Coronation, April 22, 1661, and for this service he was appointed Composer in Ordinary. When Locke died in 1689, Henry Purcell, the son, composed an elegy in memory of this friend of his father and of himself.

Of Purcell's mother little appears to be known. She survived her son by four years, dying in 1699.

As has already been stated, at the time of his father's death Purcell was but in his sixth year, and little able to care for himself. Fortunately a protector, and a kind one, was at hand in the person of his father's brother, Thomas Purcell, also a Gentleman of the Chapel Royal and, in addition, a lay vicar of Westminster Abbey and, like his brother, music copyist there. He was also lutenist to the King and Dr. Cummings gives a copy of the Royal warrant appointing him to the last-named position: it sets forth in formal language how "wee have made choice of Thomas Purcell to serve us in the office and place of one of our musitians in ordinary for the lute and voyce, in the roome of Henry Lawes, deceased, and for this service and attendance in that place, are pleased to allow him the wages and livery of six-and-thirty pounds, two shillings

and sixpence by the year during his life." This warrant is dated as "Given the 29th of our November, *in the 14th year of our reign.*" Charles had, as a matter of fact, done precious little reigning during eleven out of these thirteen odd years, and one wonders whether the new "Musitian in ordinary for lute and voyce" did not enjoy a quiet smile over his warrant before he put it away in a safe place.

Later, in 1672, when his adopted son was thirteen or fourteen years of age, Thomas Purcell added to his "six-and-thirty pounds, two shillings and sixpence by the year" the moiety of "fifty-two pounds fifteen shillings and tenpence by the year," this sum being shared with Pelham Humfrey. This was as fee for his services as "Composer in Ordinary for the Violins," a position shared by the two musicians so long as both lived and then to go to the longer liver. Further, this pluralist uncle of Purcell's was a master of the King's royal band, and here again Humfrey was associated with him—this time as his junior and second in command. Other important positions in London's little world of music he also held, including that of "Marshall of the Corporation of Musique of Westminster." As regards his Court appointments it must be remembered that multiplication of these did not necessarily mean financial ease: Charles was never a good payer except where his court favourite or lady friends were concerned, and the wages of his musicians were, on occasion, as much as four or five years in arrear, as witness a well-known entry in Pepys' Diary.

This then was Purcell's guardian—a strong and popular man, evidently of recognised musical gifts, and, as we may surmise, a kind-hearted *adopted father* to the little orphan. It is pleasant to recall that he had an opportunity of seeing his nephew grow up and in an established position, for the latter was twenty-three or twenty-four years old, a married man, organist of Westminster Abbey, and a popular theatre composer, and had for a fortnight, at any rate, been organist of the Chapel Royal when death robbed him of his boyhood's best friend. Purcell's first and second fathers are both buried in the cloisters of the Abbey they served.

It was in the year of his father's death, 1664, that Purcell became himself a member of the choir of the Chapel Royal—one of the "Children of the Chapel." The Chapel Royal has always been a great nursery of musicians. It was probably founded by Henry IV; at all events it was in full order in his son's time, for in 1418, when Henry V was on his second expedition

to France, he sent to England for his Chapel in order that his celebration of Easter might lack nothing in impressiveness. Other English sovereigns continued the institution and by the time of Elizabeth almost every musician of any importance was a member of it; go through the great names of the period, Tallis, Byrd, Morley, Bull, Gibbons—nearly every composer whose gifts are still remembered was in one way or another indebted to the Chapel Royal for the opportunity of developing them. The duties of the "Gentlemen" and "Children" were not exclusively musical and the English Drama owes a great deal of its development to their practice of performing plays before the sovereign. At the period just mentioned over £1,500 a year was spent upon the royal musical establishment.

During the Commonwealth the music of the Chapel Royal, like that of the Cathedrals and other churches, had been silenced, but within three weeks of the return of Charles II, Pepys, the diarist, was able to record "this day the organs did begin to play at Whitehall before the King" and before a further three weeks had elapsed he heard his first choral service in the same place.

At the outset there was a great difficulty in procuring boys' voices. Naturally, trained choir boys were entirely lacking. By the time little Henry Purcell joined, however, nearly four years had passed since Pepys made his historic entry, and the traditional system was doubtless once more in full swing, with one addition—Charles II, in emulation of Louis XIV, at whose Court he had spent so much time, had installed a band of four-and-twenty stringed instruments. At this time these were under the direction of John Banister: this capable musician was sent by the King to France to carry out a course of study of the methods in vogue there, and the legend goes that he lost his employment shortly after his return for declaring in the King's hearing that English violinists were better than French. The incident is one of those which if not true ought to be so, for it illustrates the royal preference for things French in music as well as in morals that had a great importance upon the artistic and social life of the day.

Purcell's youthful position in the Chapel Royal is of great importance because it brought him under the influence of three teachers whose guidance and example were of much value. These were Cooke, Humfrey and Blow, each of whom occupied in turn the position of "Master of the Children." Cooke died in 1672, in Purcell's thirteenth or fourteenth year. He was then succeeded by Humfrey, who died two years later, in Purcell's



fifteenth or sixteenth year, and was in turn followed by Dr. John Blow, who survived Purcell.

The influence of these three great teachers on Henry Purcell would call for a special article. Incidentally it would help the reader to an appreciation of the musical atmosphere in which Purcell grew up. Here I must content myself with pointing out that with the death of Cooke, Purcell came under the influence of a man of real genius—unfortunately, however, not for very long, as Pelham Humfrey<sup>1</sup> died almost exactly two years after his appointment in Cooke's room.

Humfrey's special importance in the history of the evolution of English music lies in the fact that he introduced the declamatory recitative into the anthem style. As he was but twenty-seven when he died, he left a greater record of promise than of fulfilment. What we lost by his early death we can never know. For the purposes of the present article his position as a link between Lully and Purcell (between the greatest French<sup>2</sup> composer of the period and the greatest English one), is the point demanding emphasis. The special tastes of Charles II were met by the importation of the element of French grace and expressiveness into English church music and it was Purcell upon whom, on Humfrey's death, fell the parti-coloured mantle of his teacher. A point not to be forgotten, then, in considering Purcell's style is that he was, in a sense, the musical grandson of Lully.

On the whole it must be admitted that Purcell was happy in the teachers to whom his musical education was entrusted, and not least so in the last of them—worthy John Blow (1648-1708), who became his master on Humfrey's death. The boy was then fifteen or sixteen years of age and his voice was presumably of no further use to the chapel. It was, however, apparently the laudable custom to provide for the most talented choir boys at this transition period of their careers, and Purcell's connection with the Chapel did not cease.

Purcell early made a public appearance as a composer. A three-part song *Sweet Tyranness* published in 1667 (when he was eight or nine years old) has been by some authorities ascribed to him and by some to his father, but there is no doubt as to

<sup>1</sup>This is one of those convenient names that one may spell as one prefers. The owner himself seems to have used "Humfrey," whilst his contemporaries rang the changes on "Humphrey," "Humphreys" and "Humphries." The obvious further alternatives of Humphrie, Humfreys, Humfrie and Humfries, were probably also exploited, since orthographic enterprise had no limits in the seventeenth century.

<sup>2</sup>Lully was Italian by birth, it is true, but French by up-bringing, residence and sympathies.

the authorship of *The Address of the Children of the Chapel Royal to the King, and their Master Captain Cooke, on his Majesties Birthday, A. D. 1670*, composed by Master Henry Purcell, one of the Children of the said Chapel. (It may be taken, by the way, that the title of this work is not to be read quite literally; there appears to be a little grammatical inversion in the arrangement of the names of the sovereign and of the Master of the Children). A copy of the *Macbeth* music usually ascribed to Locke is extant in Purcell's youthful handwriting, and some believe him to have been the actual composer of this work. For two centuries this music held its place on the English stage and in English concert-rooms.

A volume of anthems in Purcell's handwriting, now in the Fitzwilliam Museum, contains eleven of his own compositions and thirty-two by other people. This was written in 1673 and the boy's activity in copying the best work of other composers reminds one of the similar means of study adopted rather over twenty years later by little John Sebastian Bach.

#### THE EARLY PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES (1676-1680) AND THE PERIOD OF MUSIC FOR CATHEDRAL AND COURT (1680-1690).

The early professional activities of Purcell, now emancipated from the presumably strict discipline of the Chapel Royal, were twofold—ecclesiastical and theatrical.

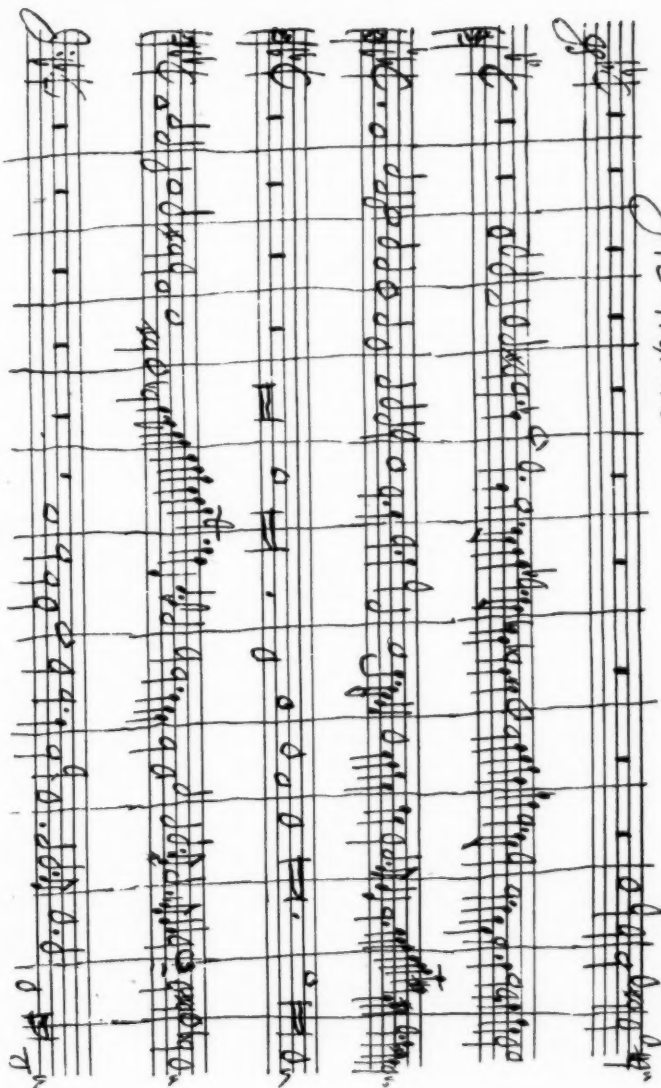
From 1676 to 1678 (aged seventeen or eighteen to nineteen or twenty) he was music copyist at Westminster Abbey, succeeding in this position one of the Minor Canons. As already mentioned, his father had held this post twelve years before and he himself later occupied it for a further period of two years, ten years elapsing between his two periods.

Whilst carrying on his duties at the Abbey he became active as a theatre composer, supplying music for Shadwell's comedy *Epsom Wells* and tragedy *The Libertine*, and Dryden's tragedy *Aurunge-Zebe*. Mrs. Bohn's *Abdelazor*, Shadwell's "derangement" of *Timon of Athens*, D'Urfey's *The Virtuous Wife*, and Lee's *The Force of Love*. From this list, it seems quite evident that the young musician's powers were generally recognized in theatrical circles.

At this time the English stage, under the influence of a French-bred monarch, was approaching the Continental style in character. The theatre itself was changing in internal arrangements, the Elizabethan projection of the stage into the pit

*Here Equick 6, 7, 8 and Tambour's*

*In nomine*





gradually becoming less. Moveable scenery, introduced into England the year after the King's accession, was becoming common; women were at last being cast for the female parts, previously played by boys. The secret of the use of blank verse had been practically lost: tragedies, at any rate, were written in rhymed couplets. The popularity of playgoing was enormous. (Pepys offers the best source of reference as to the theatre life of the period.)

During this period, Purcell contributed a song to the new edition of Playford's *Choice Ayres* and, similarly, he supplied several pieces, including an improved version of *Sweet Tyranness* to the *New Airs and Dialogues for Voices and Viols* published by Brome. He published no church music at this time, indeed the first of his compositions of this kind to appear in print was the *Te Deum* and *Jubilate* and its date of appearance was the year before its composer's death. From this it seems evident that the "market" for such works was slight and that the custom was still to hand them about in manuscript copies and to employ the copyist attached to a cathedral or large church upon the making of voice-parts. Probably in this first period of professional work Purcell wrote little church music; the glamour of the theatre would be likely to attract him, after a boyhood spent in church.

Purcell's first period of theatre work seems to have ended with his appointment as organist of Westminster Abbey in 1680. For a term of ten years, 1680 to 1690, he was occupied chiefly with duties of an ecclesiastical nature, and his theatre compositions during that term are very few.

The Westminster Abbey which Purcell knew was not greatly different from the one so familiar to us. Externally the main differences were in the West and North fronts. The Western towers were not yet carried beyond the height of the roof, and below this level existed a good deal of detail which Wren, when he designed the completion of the towers a little after Purcell's death, most sinfully wiped out. The North front has, since Purcell last saw it, suffered two "restorations," one by Wren and the other by Sir Gilbert Scott and Pearson. As Purcell was accustomed to look upon it, it was a piece of noble decay.

Internally the chief difference between Purcell's Abbey and ours lay in the fact that his was not cumbered with that mass of monumental masonry which, whilst serving the excellent purpose of recalling great men of former days, also constitutes a sort of museum of the many varieties of bad taste, sculptural and elegiac, current during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Purcell's marriage took place about the time of his appointment as Organist of the Abbey. In passing, one may remark upon the suitability of the titles of two of the theatre pieces the young composer had lately supplied with music—*The Force of Love* and *The Virtuous Wife*. (The charge has been made that Purcell and his wife were not always on the best of terms: the evidence for this is, however, *nil*—indeed it is an actual minus quantity, for there is some evidence, at least, to the opposite effect.)

In 1681, the year after the appointment to Westminster, Purcell wrote the royal ode *Swifter, Isis, Swifter flow*, one of the many settings of absurd laudation of royalty on which his pen was hereafter frequently to be engaged. The single line "Welcome, dread Sir, to town," is enough to indicate the character of the effusion.

The following year, Purcell became a pluralist by the addition of the organistship of the Chapel Royal to that of Westminster Abbey. Not many years had elapsed since he had been a choir-boy there and he must have felt it an honour to resume service so quickly in so much higher a position. He was then but twenty-three or twenty-four years of age and this double recognition of his abilities must have been a delight to his old uncle, now very infirm.

Next year, in 1683, Purcell received a further appointment—that of "Composer in Ordinary" to the King, and henceforward he did a good deal of "composing in ordinary" in the way of settings of complimentary odes; some of these might even be styled extra-"ordinary" so far as the words are concerned, but their music uniformly reaches a high level. The same year Purcell issued his first independent publication—his *Sonatas of Three Parts*, for two violins and bass to the *Harpsechord or Organ*. The price charged was ten shillings to subscribers and fifteen to non-subscribers. The following advertisement is from the *London Gazette*:

Whereas the time in now expired, this is therefore to desire those Persons that have subscribed to Mr. Henry Purcells Sonata's to repair to his house in St. Ann's Lane beyond Westminster Abbey, or to send Proposal-paper they received with the Receipt to it when they Subscribed, and those who subscribed without a Paper or Receipt to bring a Note under the Persons Hand to whom they Subscribed, that there may be no mistake, and they shall receive their Books, paying the remainder part of the money.

In a dedication, addressed to the King, the composer "assumed the confidence of laying them at" his Sacred feet, spoke of the



works as the immediate Results of his Majesties Royall favour, and was constrain'd to hope he might presume, amongst others of his Majesties over-oblig'd and altogether undeserving Subjects, that his Majesty would with his accustom'd Clemency, Vouchsafe to Pardon the best endeavours of his Majesties Most Humble and Obedient Subject and Servant.

After this rigamarole (which is, of course, quite in the spirit of the times) no one can, surely, doubt the justice of Purcell's designation of himself in the last seven or eight words of the dedication. Uriah Heep, himself, could go no further in humility, indeed that engaging personage appears to have been merely what the biologist calls "a survival from the Stuart period."

Three Odes for the Festival of St. Cecilia were written about this time.

The Temple Church was, the following year, the scene of an interesting event—nothing less than a competition between two organ builders, each supported by eminent organists. Purcell and his old master Blow were both concerned in this, as was also Draghi for his name should be substituted for that of Lully in the extract given below, the slip being that of Dr. Tudway, a pupil of Blow and a fellow-pupil of Purcell. The quotation (with its interesting allusion to the notorious Judge Jeffreys) is from a letter by Tudway to his son.

Upon the decease of Mr. Dallans and the elder Harris, Mr. Renatus Harris and Father Smith became great rivals in their employment, and several tryals of skill there were betwixt them on several ocasions; but the famous contest between these two artists was at the Temple church, where a new organ was going to be erected towards the latter end of K. Charles the second's time: both made friends for that employment; but as the society could not agree about who should be the man, the Master of the Temple and the Benchers proposed they both should set up an organ on each side of the church, which in about half a year or three quarters of a year was done accordingly; Dr. Blow and Mr. Purcell, who was then in his prime, shewed and played Father Smith's organ on appointed days to a numerous audience; and, till the other was heard, everybody believed that Father Smith certainly would carry it.

Mr. Harris brought Mr. Lully, organist to Queen Catherine, a very eminent master, to touch his organ, which brought Mr. Harris's organ into that vogue; they thus continued vying with one another near a twelve-month.

Then Mr. Harris challenged Father Smith to make additional stops against a set time; these were the Vox-humane, the Cremona or Violin stop, the double Courtel or bass Flute, with some others I may have forgot.

These stops, as being newly invented, gave great delight and satisfaction to the numerous audience; and were so well imitated on both sides, that it was hard to judge the advantage of either. At last it was left to my Lord Chief Justice Jeffries, who was of that house, and he put an end to the controversy by pitching upon Father Smith's organ; so Mr. Harris's organ was taken away

without loss of reputation, and Mr. Smith's remains to this day. . . . . Now began the setting up of organs in the chiefest parishes of the city of London, where for the most part Mr. Harris had the advantage of Father Smith, making I believe two to his one; among them some are reckoned very eminent, viz: the organ at Saint Bride's, Saint Lawrence near Guildhall, Saint Mary Axe, etc.

The Honourable Roger North who was in London at the time of the contention at the Temple Church, says, in his memoirs of music, that the competition between Smith and Harris, the two best artists in Europe, was carried on with such violence by the friends of both sides that they "were just not ruined." Indeed, old Roseingrave assured me that the partizans for each candidate in the fury of their zeal proceeded to the most mischievous and unwarrantable acts of hostility; and that in the night preceding the last trial of the reed stops, the friends of Harris cut the bellows of Smith's organ in such a manner that when the time came for playing upon it no wind could be conveyed into the wind-chest.

The specifications of the winning instrument are given below. It will be seen that it had three manuals but no pedals. Later it was, apparently, moved from its position at the side of the church to a gallery between the round nave and rectangular choir of the church, and it is understood that the choir were placed in this gallery.

"3 full setts of keyes and quarter notes.

GREAT (10 stops)—Prestant (metal), 61 pipes; Hohlfloete (wood and metal), 61; Prin. (metal), 61; Quint (metal), 61; Super 8ve, 61; Cornet (metal), 112; Sesquialtera (metal), III ranks, 183; Gedact (wood), 61; Mixture (metal), 226; Trumpet (metal), 61.

CHOIR (6 stops)—Gedact (wood), 61; Hohlfloete (metal), 61; Sadt (metal), 61; Spitzfloete (metal), 61; Viol and Violin (metal), 61; Vox Humana (metal), 61.

ECHO (7 stops)—Gedact (wood), 61; Super 8ve (metal), 61; Gedact (wood), 29; Flute (metal), 29; Cornet (metal), III ranks, 87; Sesquialtera, 105; Trumpet, 29."

A "Prestant" was a Diapason stop of which the pipes were placed in front of the case and a "Sadt" was a kind of Gemshorn.

This may be a convenient place to give some account of the Court of which Purcell was an official. He served three sovereigns and, in essentials, their courts probably differed little. The one described is that of Charles II, with which Purcell was in one way or another connected for about twenty years—the last three of them as organist of the Royal Chapel. Here indebtedness must be expressed to the late Sir Walter Besant who, in his *Westminster* has called attention to a book entitled *The Present State of London*, published in 1681, for George Lurkin, Enoch Prosser and John How at the "Rose and Crown," and has cleverly

summarised that portion relating to the Court. The gist of his summary is given below.

The Chapel Royal is a "Royal Peculiar" and is not subject to episcopal control. Its Dean was generally a Bishop: he chose a Sub-Dean or Precentor. The other officials included thirty-six "Gentlemen" (twelve being priests and the rest singing clerks), twelve "Children," three Organists, four Vergers, a Sergeant, two Yeomen and a Groom of the Chapel. There was a private oratory where every day one of the chaplains read service. Forty-eight Chaplains in Ordinary were appointed, four being in residence monthly. A Clerk of the Closet had the arduous office of resolving any spiritual doubts of the sovereign: it may be surmised that Charles made little use of this official, since a paper found after his death made it quite clear that his views as to the position of the Church of England were not exactly orthodox. Six officers were attached to the Almonry, the Bishop of London generally being their head. From this provisor those who wish to be charitable to the departed may infer that Charles was generous, whether or not he was just.

The chief civil officer was the Lord Steward, who exercised authority over all the court officers except those of the Chapel, the Chamber and the Stable. He carried a white staff when in the Presence and when he went out a bareheaded footman preceded him with the same. His annual remuneration consisted of £100 and his daily provision of sixteen dishes and suitable liquid concomitants. Another great officer was the Lord Chamberlain, who supervised the officers of the Chamber and of the Revels; music and plays were under his control and to this day a relic of that control exists. The Master of the Horse was a third power in the Court; and under the three officials mentioned were the Treasurer of the Household, the Comptroller and many others.

The Court of Green Cloth, sitting every day in the Compting House, had authority to maintain the peace for twelve miles round.

The Chief Clerk received the King's guests, looked after Pantry, Buttery and Cellar. A Knight Harbinger with three Gentlemen Harbingers and seven Yeomen Harbingers provided lodging for guests, ambassadors and servants.

The Servants in Ordinary were too numerous for mention here; they amounted to over two hundred and their list closed with a Historiographer, a Hydrographer, a Cosmographer, a Poet Laureate and a Notary.

In addition to all these there were such important officials as the Royal Falconer (with thirty-three underlings), the Master of Buckhounds (with thirty-four), the Master of Otter Hounds and the Master of Harriers (with five apiece). So the King had a nice little force nearly eighty strong to assist him whenever he felt inclined to make war upon the animal creation.

There were sixty-four Musicians in Ordinary, fifteen Trumpeters and Kettle Drummers, seven Drummers and Fifes, Barbers, Chyrurgeons, Printers (one of them especially for Oriental tongues), bookseller, silkman, woolendrapier, etc., and a Master of Cock-fighting. There was actually such a person as a Cormorant Keeper, but indeed all possible

(and some almost impossible) trades were represented in the list of Court officers. A scenographer or Designer of Prospects, a Comedian and twenty-five Actors must not be overlooked.

Foreigners were astonished at the magnificence of the Court, and well they might be. The following extracts must conclude this account:—

The Court of England, for Magnificence, Order, Number and Quality of Officers, rich Furniture, Entertainment and Civility to Strangers, and for plentiful Tables, might compare with the best in Christendom, and far excels most Courts abroad. It hath for a long time been a Pattern of Hospitality and Charity, to the Nobility and Gentry of England. All Noblemen or Gentlemen, Subjects or Strangers, were freely entertained at the plentiful Tables of His Majesties Officers. Divers Dishes were provided every day extraordinary for the King's Honour. Two hundred and forty Gallons of Beer a day, were allowed at the Buttery-Bar for the Poor, besides all the broken Meat, Bread, etc., gathered into Baskets, and given to the Poor, at the Court-Gates, by Two Grooms, and Two Yeomen of the Almonry, who have Salaries of His Majesty for that Service. The Lord Almoner hath the Privilege to give the Kings Dish, to whatsoever Poor Man he pleases; that is, the first Dish at Dinner which is set upon the Kings Table, or in stead thereof four-pence a day; next he distributes to 24 poor men, named by the Parishioners of the Parish adjacent to the Kings Place of Residence, to each of them fourpence in money, a Two-penny Loaf, and a Gallon of Beer, or instead thereof three pence in Money, equally to be divided among them every Morning at seven of the Clock at the Court-Gate. The Sub-Almoner is to Scatter new-coined Two-pences in the Towns and Places where the King passes through in his Progresses, to a certain Sum by the Year. Besides, there are many poor Pensioners, either because so old that they are unfit for Service, or the Widows of any of the Kings Servants that dyed poor, who have a Competency duly paid them: Besides, there are distributed among the Poor the larger Offerings which the King gives in Collar Days.

The Form of Government is by the wisdom of many Ages, so contrived and regulated, that it is almost impossible to mend it. The Account (which is of so many Natures, and is therefore very difficult, must pass through many hands, and is therefore very exact) is so wisely contrived and methodized, that without the Combination of everyone of these following Officers, viz., the Cofferer, a Clerk of the Green-Cloth, a Clerk Comptroller, a Clerk of the Kitchen, of the Spicery or Avery, or a particular Clerk, together with the conjunction of a Purveyor and Waiter in the Office, it is impossible to defraud the King of a Loaf of Bread, of a Pint of Wine, a Quart of Beer, or Joint of Meat, or Money, or anything else.

One idea that strikes one, as one reads the circumstantial relations of Masters Lurkin, Prosser and How, is that our friend Purcell was, after all, only one amongst a huge army of officials. Probably, however, his official position and abilities were such as to prevent his being entirely lost in the crowd, for the King loved music. Let us hope that he was placed a little above the

Master of the Cock-fighting; it would, perhaps, be asking too much to express the hope that he should approach in consideration the confidential Chiffinch, whose special duties were connected with the back stairs.

In 1685 Purcell's first Royal master died. To quote Evelyn:—

I can never forget the inexpressible luxury and profaneness, gaming, and all dissoluteness, and as it were total forgetfulness of God (it being Sunday evening), which this day se'nnight I was witness of, the King sitting and toying with his concubines, Portsmouth, Cleveland, and Mazarine, etc., a French boy singing love-songs, in that glorious gallery, whilst about twenty of the great courtiers and other dissolute persons were at Basset round a large table, a bank of at least 2000 in gold before them; upon which two gentlemen who were with me made reflections with astonishment. Six days after, was all in the dust.

The Coronation of James II occupied Purcell in much special musical preparation, including the erection of a special organ. The "King's Choir of Vocal Music" occupied a gallery on the south side of the chancel, whilst the "King's Instrumental Music" occupied a similar one on the north side. Purcell himself, strangely enough, did not play the organ but sang amongst the basses. His anthems *My Heart is Inditing* and *I was glad* were composed for the occasion. He received a sum of £34 odd, for his help with regard to the erection of the organ.

Purcell's ode *Why are all the Muses mute?* written about this time expressed what was supposed to be the national sentiment at the time. The autocratic James, who surely had already a sufficiently good opinion of his own merits and power, is addressed as—

Caesar, Earth's greatest good!  
Caesar, Heaven's choicest care!

and the popular support of Monmouth's rebellion is alluded to as "The many headed beast."

The ode ends

His fame shall endure till all things decay  
His fame and the world together shall die,  
Shall vanish together away.

Four years later "Caesar" had ignominiously fled the country!

#### THE THEATRE—SECOND PERIOD (1685-1695)

About this time, Purcell, after a cessation of five years or so, resumed the composition of music for the theatre and continued this to the end of his life, ten years later.

Incidental music to Davenant's *Circe* was probably the first-fruits of this renewed secular activity. It seems to have been followed by music for Dryden's *Tyrannick Love*, D'Urfey's *The Fool's Preferment*, or the *Three Dukes of Dunstable*; Shadwell's "improvement" of Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, Betterton's adaptation of Fletcher's *Dioclesian* (at first called *The Prophetess*), Lee's *Massacre of Paris*, Dryden's *Amphytrion*, Elkanah Settle's *Distressed Innocence*, Dryden's *King Arthur*, Southerne's *Sir Anthony Love and The Gordion Knot Untied*, *The Fairy Queen*, by an anonymous author (after Shakespeare) Southerne's *The Wife's Excuse*, Howard and Dryden's *The Indian Queen*, Dryden's *The Indian Emperour*, Dryden and Lee's *Edipus Cleomanes*, D'Urfey's *The Marriage-Hater Matched*, Congreve's *The Old Batchelor*, D'Urfey's *The Richmond Heiress*, Southerne's *The Maid's Last Prayer*, Bancroft's *Henry the Second*, D'Urfey's *Don Quixote*, Crowne's *The Married Beau*, Congreve's *The Double Dealer*, Southerne's *The Fatal Marriage*, Dryden's *Love Triumphant* (the last stage piece that poet wrote), Ravenscroft's *The Canterbury Guest*, Scott's *The Mock Marriage*, Gould's *The Rival Sisters*, Southerne's *Oroonoko*, an adaptation of Beaumont and Fletcher's *The Knight of Malta*, and *Bonduca*.

This looks a long list, and the reader is probably a little out of breath after reading it; it averages, however, only three or four plays a year, and though this must have meant that Purcell had generally some work of the kind on hand and that in certain years he was kept rather hard at it, it must be remembered that not in every case was the amount of music supplied for a play very great. His facility in dramatic writing must have been considerable and, had he but had the opportunity that came to Handel when, a very few years later fashionable London went mad about opera, he might have acquired more money and greater fame.

Purcell's twenty-eighth to thirty-first years (assuming he was born in 1658) saw three births and two deaths in his family. Little John Baptiste, the first child, born in the summer of 1682, had died after two short months of life. Thomas, the date of whose birth seems undetermined, was now lost to his parents (August 1686) and the home was once again childless. About a year later (June 1687) another little boy came into the world, and was named, like his father and grandfather, Henry; he only lived about three months, however. So far, in about five years of married life, the young couple had had three children and lost them all. Child mortality in that day was, of course, frightful.



To-day it varies within enormous limits in different districts of the same city, housing conditions and knowledge of hygiene in different states of society being largely the determining factors. No wonder then that there is a big difference between the mortality of children in the seventeenth century and in the twentieth.

The Purcells were, however, to have three more children, and these were all to live. They were Frances (May 1688), Edward (September 1689) and Mary Peters (December 1693). All these survived their father but the youngest is supposed to have predeceased her mother, as the latter's will does not mention her. Frances married a poet and dramatist, Leonard Welsted, Gent., and died in 1724 (aged thirty-six) and Edward, who was only six years old when he lost his father, became a well-known organist, ultimately being appointed to St. Margaret's, Westminster, under the shadow of the Abbey where his father had spent so many busy and useful years. He died in 1740 (aged fifty-one). Longevity was rare in the Purcell family—probably it was rare in any family in those days.

By Royal Command, in 1688, Purcell composed a Thanksgiving Anthem for the Queen's Pregnancy—*Blessed are they that fear the Lord*. Few of his countrymen joined in any hearty thanksgiving, for the expected event seemed to remove the possibility of the Protestant succession. However, a day was officially appointed for the London rejoicings and, as news travelled slowly then, places beyond a twelve mile radius of London were to celebrate the occasion four days later.

When the child was born there were not wanting rumours which explained its entrance to the Palace by other than natural means, hinted at a warming pan as the means of conveyance, and denied its royal parentage. Some thousands of lives were later to be lost in the endeavour to establish the right of this infant to the thrones of England and Scotland, and, as "the Old Pretender" his fame will go down to unborn generations of school children.

The stirring events of the Revolution of the year 1689 need hardly be described here. An incident concerning Purcell and connected with the change of government, which has been frequently told, must not, however, be overlooked. Probably Hawkins was the first to print a relation of it and the story as he tells it in his *History of Music* is quoted below:

In the beginning of the year 1689 he became engaged in a dispute with Dr. Sprat, the then Dean, and the Chapter of Westminster, the occasion whereof was this. It seems that at the coronation of king

William and queen Mary, he had received and claimed as his right, the money taken for admission into the organ loft of persons desirous of being near spectators of that ceremony, which for the following reasons must be supposed to have amounted to a considerable sum; the profit arising to the owner of one of the houses at the west end of the Abbey, where only the procession could be viewed, amounted at the last coronation to five hundred pounds. The organ in Purcell's time was on the north side of the choir, and was much nearer the Altar than now, so that spectators from thence might behold the whole of that august ceremony.

A sum like that which this must be presumed to have been was worth contending for, and if Purcell had the authority of precedent for his support, he was right in retaining it as a perquisite arising from his office; but his masters thought otherwise, and insisted on it as their due, for in an old chapter book I find the following entry: "18 April, 1689, Mr. Purcell, the organ blower, to pay to Mr. Needham such money as was received by him for places in the organ loft, and in default thereof his place to be declared null and void, and that his stipend or salary be detained in the Treasurer's hands until further orders." Upon which it may be observed that the penning of it is an evidence of great ignorance or malice, in that it describes him by the appellation of organ blower who was organist of their own church, and in truth the most excellent musician of his time.

What the issue of this contest was does nowhere appear. It may be supposed either that he refunded the money or compounded the matter with the Dean and Chapter, it being certain that he continued to execute his office for some years after.

The above paragraphs did not appear in Hawkins' work as it was first published. He left them with other matters when he died—having intended them for a further edition of the History which he never carried out—and they appear on his death to have been deposited in the British Museum. In 1853 Alfred Novello published a new edition of the work, largely carried through by Mrs. Cowden Clarke, and in this Hawkins' British Museum additions were inserted. Dr. Cummings has, however, pointed out that Hawkins had preserved also a note on the above by Dr. Benjamin Cooke, which should certainly have been included. It is as follows:

The order herein alluded to is not the real entry in the Chapter minutes, but is in another old book which contains copies or memorandums of many of the Chapter minutes, and probably was the rough draft, or it might be done by Mr. Needham afterwards from his recollection, and so the wording is different tho' the substance of both is the same, and this book was shown to me, and afterwards by my desire to Sir John Hawkins, at which time we understood it to be the original Chapter minutes, but have since been convinced of the contrary by having seen the original minute; and in this last he is not described by

the title of *Organ-blower*, as he is in the former, but he is stil'd organist.  
—B. C.

In December 1694 the news spread that the Queen was ill, and soon it was added that her malady was small-pox—one which was in those days the cause of a frightful mortality amongst all classes. On the 28th, after composedly arranging her affairs and taking communion at the hands of Tenison, she passed away, to the inconsolable grief of her husband, whose own life was endangered by the paroxysms of emotion which followed.

Strange as it seems to us, over two months elapsed between the death and the burial of the Queen. The funeral, in which Purcell had a part of importance to perform, has been well described by Macaulay:

The funeral was long remembered as the saddest and most august that Westminster had ever seen. While the Queen's remains lay in state at Whitehall, the neighbouring streets were filled every day, from sunrise to sunset, by crowds which made all traffic impossible. The two Houses with their maces followed the hearse, the Lords robed in scarlet and ermine, the Commons in long black mantles. No preceding Sovereign had ever been attended to the grave by a Parliament: for, till then, the Parliament had always expired with the Sovereign. . . . . The whole Magistracy of the City swelled the procession. The banners of England and France, Scotland and Ireland, were carried by great nobles before the corpse. The pall was borne by the chiefs of the illustrious houses of Howard, Seymour, Grey, and Stanley. On the gorgeous coffin of purple and gold were laid the crown and sceptre of the realm. The day was well suited to such a ceremony. The sky was dark and troubled; and a few ghastly flakes of snow fell on the black plumes of the funeral car. Within the Abbey, nave, choir and transept were in a blaze with innumerable waxlights. The body was deposited under a magnificent canopy in the centre of the church while the Primate preached. The earlier part of his discourse was deformed by pedantic divisions and subdivisions: but towards the close he told what he had himself seen and heard with a simplicity and earnestness more affecting than the most skilful rhetoric. Through the whole ceremony the distant booming of cannon was heard every minute from the batteries of the Tower. The gentle Queen sleeps among her illustrious kindred in the southern aisle of the Chapel of Henry the Seventh.

The Anthems *Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord* and *Thou knowest, Lord, the secrets of our hearts* were composed by Purcell for this mournful occasion. Both of these were in the old style—the newer one, with its introductions and interludes and brief snatches of solo and trio and chorus was well enough to amuse Charles II, but not suitable to mourn his niece. The latter anthem has, it is said, been sung at every choral funeral in Westminster Abbey and St. Paul's Cathedral since it was

first written, and when, in 1724, Dr. Croft set music to the Burial Office, he left these words unset, feeling that Purcell had fitted them for all time. Dr. Tudway, who sang in the choir at this funeral, says that *Thou knowest, Lord* was accompanied by "flat mournful trumpets."

That its greatest figure should have died at the age of thirty-six or thirty-seven (on November 21, 1695) is one of the misfortunes of British music. Had he lived sixty years, as his friend and teacher Blow did, he would have seen eight years of Handel's activity in this country, and might have profited by his own wide theatrical experience and by Handel's example to write actual operas and to maintain a little longer the position of the British composer in the world of art. Of Bach's music it is unlikely he would ever have heard, as the fame of it only reached England long years after its composer had been laid in the grave. One may imagine that Purcell, who was always learning, who profited by the activities of the contemporary French school and deliberately adopted the methods of the Italians, would have rejoiced had fate brought him into the world a little later and enabled him to profit by the labours and genius of the great Germans also. In his choral compositions, indeed, he shows a distinct affinity to the style of Handel and often in his instrumental work we are reminded of Bach—indeed, one of his compositions, a keyboard Toccata, has actually been printed in the great Bach Gesellschaft edition, under a misunderstanding as to its authorship.

It was on the 21st of November, 1695 (on the eve of the festival of St. Cecilia, as the late Dr. Cummings reminded us) that Purcell lay a-dying. Of his illness we have no reliable particulars. Hawkins has the following in his history; it will be observed that he states nothing positively and gives all on hearsay and no modern historian attaches any importance to the story. By a curious coincidence a tradition of a rather similar character became attached to the memory of Hawkins himself after his death, and his daughter was vigorous in her refutation of it.

There is a tradition that his death was occasioned by a cold which he caught in the night, waiting for admittance into his own house. It is said that he used to keep late hours, and that his wife had given orders to his servants not to let him in after midnight: unfortunately he came home heated with wine from the tavern at an hour later than that prescribed him, and through the inclemency of the air contracted a disorder of which he died. If this be true, it reflects but little honour on Madam Purcell, for she so is styled in the advertisements of his works; and but ill agrees with those expressions of grief for her dear

lamented husband, which she makes use of to Lady Elizabeth Howard in the dedication of the *Orpheus Britannicus*. It seems probable that the disease of which he died was rather a lingering than an acute one, perhaps a consumption; and that, for some time at least, it had no way affected the powers of his mind, since one of the most celebrated of his compositions, the song "From rosy bowers," is in the printed book said to have been the last of his works, and to have been set during that sickness which put a period to his days.

There is no need, in discrediting the above story, to make out that our greatest British musician was an absolute Band of Hope member. Hard drinking was common in his day: Pepys was often "foxed," as he terms it, and Evelyn laments the practice of showing hospitality to masters by making the servants drunk. The drinking habits of his countrymen even a century after Purcell's death are startling to us who read of them to-day and Purcell would have been more than human had he not sometimes come home with a little more liquid inside him than made for bee-line pedestrianism or quiet respectable conduct. Indeed the greatest improbability in the above story lies in the assertion that his wife took drunkenness and late hours so seriously. But there is no dependable support whatever for the view that his death had any immediate connection with conviviality.

The day Purcell died he made his will. It reads as follows:—

In the name of God, Amen. I, Henry Purcell, of the City of Westminster, gent., being dangerously ill as to the constitution of my body, but in good and perfect mind and memory (thanks be to God), doe by these presents publish and declare this to be my last Will and Testament. And I doe hereby give and bequeath unto my loveing Wife, Frances Purcell, all my Estate both reall and personall of what nature and kind soever, to her and to her assigns for ever. And I doe hereby constitute and appoint my said loveing Wife my sole Executrix of this my last Will and Testament, revokeing all former Will or Wills. Witnesse my hand and seale this twentieth first day of November, Annoq. Dni., One thousand six hundred ninety-five, and in the seventh yeare of the Raigne of King William the Third, etc.

H. PURCELL

"Signed, sealed, published, and declared by the said Henry Purcell in the presence of Wm. Eccles, John Capelin.

B. Peters.

The care of her three children and the publication of her husband's works occupied Mrs. Henry Purcell for the eleven years that she survived him. In the year after her husband's death she published *A Choice Collection of Lessons for the Harpsichord or Spinnet, composed by ye late Mr Henry Purcell, Organist of his Majesties Chappell Royal, and of St. Peter's, Westminster, printed on copper plates by Mrs. Frances Purcell, executrix of the*

author and are to be sold by Henry Playford, at his shop in the Temple. Three editions of this work appeared, so Purcell's general popularity at the time of his death is evident.

In 1697 Mrs. Purcell brought out the *Ten Sonatas in Four Parts. Composed by the late Mr. Henry Purcell*, dedicating it to an amateur musician, a pupil of her late husband, Lady Rhodia Cavendish.

At the end of the above work appeared an advertisement as follows:—

By Reason Madam Purcell's Ayres and Sonata's coming out this Trinity Term, the Press could not compleat the Collection of Choice Songs of Mr. Henry Purcell's; for which, several Gentlemen have Subscrib'd; and also a great Number of Songs than was Proposed, will be Added. Therefore all Gentlemen and Ladys that intend to Subscribe, are desired to doe it before the 25th of July next; and the Books, without farther delay, will be deliver'd Michaelmas-Term next.

The work thus referred to seems to be the first volume of

A Collection of all the Choicest Songs for one, two, and three voices, compos'd by Mr. Henry Purcell; together with such Symphonies for Violins or Flutes as were by him design'd for any of them: and a thorough-bass to each song; figur'd for the Organ, Harpsichord, or Theorbolute. All which are placed in their several Keys to the order of the Gamut.

This appeared in 1698, the second volume following in 1702. A second edition was brought out in 1706-11, and a third in 1721, when the composer had been twenty-six years dead.

The grief occasioned by Purcell's death seems to have been great and sincere. He was buried in the Abbey itself (not the cloisters) and was the first musician to be so honoured. On the tombstone the following lines were inscribed—

Plaudite, felices superi, tanto hospite; nostris  
Praefuerat, vestris additur ille choris:  
Invida nec vobis Purcellum terra reposcat,  
Questa decus sedi, deliciasque breves.  
Tam cito decessisse, modos cui singula debet  
Musa, prophana suos, religiosa suos.  
Vivit, Io et vivat, dum vicina organa spirant,  
Dumque colet numeris turba canora Deum.

Hawkins offers the following translation of this—



Applaud so great a guest celestial pow'rs,  
 Who now resides with you, but once was ours;  
 You let invidious earth no more reclaim  
 Her short-liv'd fav'rite and her chiefest fame;  
 Complaining that so prematurely dy'd  
 Good-nature's pleasure and devotion's pride.  
 Dy'd? no he lives while yonder organs sound,  
 And sacred echos to the choir rebound.

A tablet fixed to a pillar where the organ then stood bore the following inscription—

Here lyes  
 Henry Purcell, Esq.;  
 Who left this life,  
 And is gone to that blessed place,  
 Where only his harmony can be exceeded.  
 Obiit 21mo. die Novembris,  
 Anno Ætatis suae 37mo,  
 Annoq; Domini 1695.

The lack of sufficient punctuation leaves a certain verbal ambiguity here, but the sentiment intended is irreproachable. Lady Elizabeth Howard was responsible for the placing of this memorial. She was the wife of Sir Robert Howard, the dramatist, and is said to have been a pupil of Purcell.

It is but fitting that a sketch of Henry Purcell's short but busy life conclude with John Dryden's beautiful ode. It is here given not in its usual but in its original form, as in the recent "Oxford Edition" of Dryden's poetical works:

#### ON THE DEATH OF MR. PURCELL

Mark how the lark and linnet sing;  
 With rival notes  
 They strain their warbling throats,  
 To welcome in the spring.  
 But in the close of night,  
 When Philomel begins her heavenly lay,  
 They cease their mutual spite,  
 Drink in her music with delight  
 And, listening, and silent, and silent  
 And listening, and listening and silent obey.

So ceased the rival crew, when Purcell came,  
 They sang no more, or only sung his fame:  
 Struck dumb, they all admired the godlike man:  
 Alas! too soon retired  
 As he too late began,

We beg not hell our Orpheus to restore:  
Had he been there,  
Their sovereign's fear  
Had sent him back before.  
The power of harmony too well they knew,  
He long ere this had tuned their jarring sphere,  
And left no hell below.

The heavenly choir, who heard his notes from high,  
Let down the scale of music from the sky:  
They handed him along,  
And all the way he taught, and all the way they sung.  
Ye brethren of the lyre, and tuneful voice,  
Lament his lot; but at your own rejoice:  
Now live secure, and linger out your days;  
The gods are pleased alone with Purcell's lays,  
Nor know to mend their choice.

## MUSICAL ALLUSIONS OF GREAT WRITERS

By CLEMENT ANTROBUS HARRIS

IN 1894 Professor Waldo Pratt, of Hartford Theological Seminary, read a paper before the Musical Association in London on "The Isolation of Music." Therein he complained of the neglect of music in both popular and scholarly thought, and sought to demonstrate the natural affinities of music with literature.

If the services rendered to the Divine Art by great writers are to be judged by their length and number, the charge may be justified. But if, on the other hand, the criterion is to be quality and universality, the indictment certainly falls to the ground. For there is no branch of literature, whether we take Philosophy, Poetry, or Romance; no age in the history of letters; no country known to the lover of books, which has not laid a tribute generous in value if small in bulk, at the feet of Apollo. Rather it is musicians who, though now amending their ways, have too often been more disposed to carp at the occasional technical errors of literary men—a disposition excusable in the case of many novelists—than to recognize the immense debt which their art owes to the pen.

True, histories and text-books apart—which C. F. Becker estimated at 6500, in 1839—works of high literary quality wholly devoted to music are but few in number. James Harris's "Discourse on Music, Painting and Poetry" (1744); James Beattie's essay on Poetry and Music, written at Aberdeen somewhat later; H. R. Haweis' "Music and Morals," and Mr. Filson Young's "Meistersingers" have few companions. But from Plato and Aristotle and their Chinese contemporary, Meng-Tse, who deal at length with the art, to the present day, allusions to music among the world's greatest writers are innumerable. The Church Fathers, Justin Martyr, Basil, Ambrose, Jerome, Chrysostom, Augustine, pay court to Religion's handmaid almost as a matter of course. So do the statesmen Boëthius and Cassiodorus and many other Latinists. Among philosophers, Lord Bacon in the "Advancement of Learning," commends the poets for having conjoined *Music and Medicine in Apollo*: because "the office of medicine

is but to tune this curious harp of man's body and to reduce it to Harmony." Burton, in the "Anatomy of Melancholy," occupies many pages in declaring "Music a Remedy." Owen Feltham, and Henry Peacham, in the "Compleat Gentleman," (1634) both discourse at length "Of Musicke," especially vindicating its extreme antiquity and classical status. Sir Thomas Browne in "Religio Medici" (1642) vies with the churchmen, the "Judicious Hooker," of a previous century, Bishops Joseph Hall, and John Earle, in extolling music as truly the Divine Art. The great diarists, John Evelyn and Samuel Pepys, record their musical impressions, especially Pepys, who was himself a musician of no mean attainments, and has placed historians of English music under a heavy debt, Samuel Johnson's lack of ear and definition of music as the "least objectionable noise" did not prevent his making more discriminating remarks at other times, if one may trust Boswell. In more recent days, Landor, de Quincey, and Cardinal Newman, all make a longer or shorter pilgrimage to the shrine of St. Cecilia. Readers of the latter's University Sermons will recall an especially fine passage, beginning: "There are seven notes in the scale; make them fourteen; yet what a slender outfit for so vast an enterprise! . . . Out of what poor elements does some great master in it create his new world."

The Cardinal was a violinist of some repute among his friends. His great antagonist, Charles Kingsley, would probably have agreed with him on this subject if on nothing else, for whereas others have called music "the speech of angels," he "will go further and call it the speech of God Himself," and, like the Greeks, regards it as a great corrective of self-will. A great New World preacher, H. W. Beecher, sees in it more of an intellectual quality: "Music," he says in the "Plymouth Pulpit," Sermon ii., "cleanses the understanding, inspires it, and lifts it into a realm which it would not reach if it were left to itself." Emerson and Ruskin were obviously not very sensitive to the cunning hand of Jubal, "charm he never so wisely." Albeit the former has an appreciative paragraph on vocal music in his "Essays," if he casts something of a slur on oratorio—which he appears to regard as purely instrumental and out of touch with life! Ruskin, on the contrary, in "Lectures on Architecture and Painting," underates solo singing at the expense of concerted music! It is otherwise with those very different writers, Henry Thoreau and Herbert Spencer—their estimates of "the literature of the heart", as Alphonse de Lamertine calls music, have notable elements in common. "Let us hear a strain of music" writes the New World

dreamer, "and we are at once advertised of a life which no man has told us of." "Those vague feelings of unexpected felicity which music arouses—those indefinite impressions of an unknown ideal life which it calls up, may be considered as a prophecy," writes the Old World philosopher; and he declares as a consequence that music may "take rank as the highest of the fine arts—the one which, more than any other, ministers to human welfare." Among living writers of prose Mr. Arthur Balfour may be cited to much the same purpose, in his "Foundations of Belief." The very shiftiness which his political opponents accuse him of, his friends attribute to his passion for truth. And to get at truth he gives literature the go-by and argues the question from music "partly because, unlike architecture, it serves no very obvious end, and we are thus absolved from giving any opinion on the relation between beauty and utility; partly because, unlike painting and poetry, it has no external reference and we are thus absolved from giving any opinion on the relation between beauty and truth." The great Conservative statesman is far from being the only philosopher to point out the unique value of music on account of its abstract quality. Witness Schopenhauer: "It stands apart from all other arts. In it we do not recognize any imitation, reproduction of an Idea of the things of the world; yet it is an art. . . . surpassingly glorious."

It is perhaps natural that poets should have found more themes for their work in music than have prose writers. Anyway it is the case. The earliest extant poem with a musical ascription is probably that of Anacreon "To His Lyre," written about 500 B. C. In Europe the Latin verses written by the monk Wulstan in praise of the remarkable organ built in Winchester Cathedral by Bishop Elphage in the 10th Century would appear to have a good claim to priority. Following these it is difficult to find anything earlier, or at least better known, than the German poem "Frau Musica" by Martin Luther. In England, especially during her Golden Age of Music—Elizabeth's reign—examples are abundant. Of many one may mention "A Song to the Lute in Musicke" from "A Paradise of Dainty Devices" believed to be by Richard Edwards, 1523-1566 (*see* Percy Reliques Book ii. p. 199. These verses occur in Romeo and Juliet and are sometimes attributed to Shakespeare); "In Praise of Musicke" by H. Gifford (1580); "For a Musician" by George Wither (1588-1669); "To Musik to becalm His Fever," and some dozen others by Herrick. Between these and present-day British writers to whom this article practically limits itself, space will admit of reference to

no more than Milton's apostrophe of Henry Lawes; the Songs and Odes to St. Cecilia by Dryden, Nicholas Brady, and Pope; the "Ode to Apollo" by Keats; "Ode on Æolus's Harp," James Thomson; the Ode for Music ("Passions") by Collins; the "Power of Music" by Dryden and Wordsworth; the "Fancy Concert" by Leigh Hunt; "Music," and "With a Guitar," by Shelley.

Nor are the seers of the nineteenth century behind their forbears in devotion to Apollo. For several examples which might be quoted from Longfellow it is sufficient to refer to his "Picture of Ole Bull, the Celebrated Violinist"; while a similar compliment has been paid to a modern fiddler, Sarasate, by Eric Mackay.

Browning was an accomplished pianist, and what is more rare, had a considerable knowledge of harmony. Consequently his works show a greater technical insight into the art, and his musical poems form a more important part of his output, than is the case with any other poet, ancient or modern.

It will be observed that Browning prefers pebbles rather than monoliths from the musical quarry. As his heroes are merely spokesmen, or audience, for his own thought, perhaps it is as well. But in the case of writers content to paint a portrait, one is glad that the great composers are not neglected. Nevertheless, such portraits are fewer than might have been expected. Among the chief are Eric Mackay's "Beethoven at the Piano-forte" and Mr. John Todhunter's verses "To Rossini," which latter show an accurate appreciation of that composer's peculiar place in the firmament of music.

If life were but a Bacchanal procession  
Of sensuous joys, thou wert its great high-priest.

Browning's "Master Hugues of Saxe-Gotha" is, of course, an imaginary character. One could wish that the pitiful treatment by his contemporaries of the world's greatest song-composer, many of whose finest works were sold for tenpence, had also been imaginary. But alas, no! and the "too, too solid truth" has stung Elsa D'Esterre Keeling into some justly reproachful verses on "The Neglect of Schubert."

Composers as a guild or craft meet with poetic recognition in a fine ode by Arthur W. E. Shaugnessy to "The Music-Makers;" and the poem has just met with musical recognition in a setting by Sir Edward Elgar. In connection with the more general



aspect, Victor Hugo's seven stanzas "Que la Musique" may be mentioned; likewise Arthur H. C. Clough's ode "Music," raising the question

Are there not two musics unto men?  
One loud and bold and coarse  
.  
.  
.  
The other soft and low.

Nationality is an important factor in music. And since it has been little recognized by poets there is the more need to mention Walt Whitman's lines on the effect "strangely fitting even here" of "Italian music in Dakota." It is not often that an individual example of the music-maker's craft affords a subject for the maker of verses. One wonders, not without a leaning to the negative, whether Browning had any particular "Toccata of Galuppi's" in mind when writing the poem under that title? He was avowedly indebted to Schumann's "Carneval" for several stanzas of "Fifine at the Fair," but the piece forms neither the title nor the main theme of the poem. A Chaconne by Bach is referred to by George Eliot in one of her poems, and likewise Mendelssohn's Wedding March by Coventry Patmore, but in both cases the allusion is merely a passing one. Nor is it often that one poem forms the subject of more than one opera. It was therefore a happy thought of Mr. Theodore Watts to write three Sonnets on "Faust" as musically interpreted respectively by Berlioz, Gounod, and Schumann.

A volume would be required to do justice to the passing allusions of poets to music. Nay, several volumes! For the various anthologies of musico-poetic references only to some extent overlap each other and by no means exhaust the subject. Suffice it to say that of the seventy-five greatest English-speaking poets from Chaucer to Swinburne, only nineteen find no place in three anthologies which lie before the writer! Of these more than half-hundred masters of song those most frequent in their allusions to the sister art are Shakespeare, who uses the word "music" 140 times, and Shelley, who perhaps equals him in frequency, if not in directness. Chaucer, Milton, Keats, Moore, and Longfellow follow with, roughly, some two-thirds the number of references. Wordsworth, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Tennyson, and Swinburne may fairly be bracketted third.

No aspect of music has escaped the ear of the poets. For with the advent of Browning certain technical harmonic features previously overlooked come under review:—

Hark, the dominant's persistence till it must be answered to!

What those lesser thirds so plaintive, sixths diminished, sigh on sigh,  
Told them something? Those suspensions, those solutions—"Must  
we die?"

Those commiserating sevenths—"Life might last! we can but try."  
*A Toccata of Galuppi's, VII.*

Here it is worth observing that in a single poem, "Charles Avison," Browning mentions no fewer than five musical forms, such as Sonata, Fugue, Suite; nine instruments, and fifteen composers!

It is interesting to the worker in sounds to notice those characteristics of his art which have appealed most strongly to the worker in words. Poets, not less than philosophers, find in music a meaning purely its own, a marvellous power to express that which can be experienced through no other medium:

It speaks a language to the world unknown.

*James Montgomery.*

And through the stream of music tell  
Its else unutterable spell.

*Matthew Arnold.*

Angel of Music! when our finest speech  
Is all too coarse to give the heart relief,  
The inmost fountains lie within thy reach.

*"The Music-Master"—William Allingham.*

Music! oh, how faint, how weak,  
Language fades before thy spell!  
Why should feeling ever speak,  
When thou canst breathe her soul so well?

*Moore.*

But God has a few of us whom He whispers in the ear;  
The rest may reason and welcome: 'tis we musicians know.

*Abt Vogler.—Browning.*

Instead

Of words, sought sounds, and saved for ever, in the same,  
Truth that escapes prose—nay, puts poetry to shame.

*Fine at the Fair.—Browning.*

Of its more purely physical effects nothing in music seems to have struck the poet mind so strongly as its cadences—the grace with which it ends: a cynic indeed might hint that to the

maker of verses music is more beautiful in dying than living! Such a stab would not, however, wound either poet or musician very deeply, for according to Charles Sackville, Earl of Dorset (1637) there is a music

That dies in every note,  
As if it sighed with each man's care  
For being so remote.

And Keats speaks of music as it reaches not one, but "each delicious ending."

Whether it be a strain which  
Had a dying fall

or un-named instruments hearing which even Shylock might

Make a swan-like end,  
Fading in music. . . .

or the "Harp of Life" which

Smote the chord of Self, that, trembling, passed in music out of sight;

or Dryden's "soft complaining flute" which

In dying notes discovers  
The woe of hapless lovers;

or "The horns of Elfland faintly blowing," the end is always the same:

Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,  
And answer, echoes, answer, dying, dying, dying.  
*Tennyson (Locksley Hall; Princess.)*

Among other of music's virtues on which the poets sing in unison is its fitness as the voice of Love; and its power to awaken memory. On the other hand they are somewhat divergent as to the respective merits of loud music and soft; and also as to its gladness or sadness, though a large majority find more of joy in it than sorrow.

It would be peculiarly inapt to estimate the value of poetic services to the musical workman by the number of his implements enumerated. Nevertheless it is not without a bearing on the subject that while showing a marked partiality for the harp, lyre, and lute, the bards have allowed few instruments to wholly escape them. Indeed the sackbut, and such modern inventions

as the harmonium and concertina, appear to be the sole omissions. And even this latter instrument is included if, under the heading of poetry, we admit such burlesque verse as the Bab Ballads! Moreover, a just appreciation of the balance between wind and string instruments may be claimed as having been shown by the practically equal references made to the organ and violin or fiddle. It must be admitted, however, that the searcher must be either much favoured by chance, or very diligent, before he comes across recognition of the oboe, bassoon, clavichord, spinet, guitar, clarinet, flageolet, fife, cornet, bagpipes, and some others. Nevertheless they are to be found by a patient enough investigator. Strange to say, despite a reference in the "Jolly Beggars" to the tuning of the pipes, he need not look for actual mention of Scotland's national instrument in Burns!

It follows as matter of course that when, discarding alike the deeps of philosophy and the heights of imagination, a writer draws his inspiration from the hearthstone and the events of daily life, the most social of arts cannot long be absent from his pages. The origin of the novel can be traced to the remotest antiquity. Historians declare that the germs found in the oriental *Panchatantra* and *Hitopadesta* were probably not the earliest. Æsop, Xenophon, and John of Damascus are later examples, followed in turn by the "Arabian Nights" and "Don Quixote." But the rejuvenation of romance, the evolution of the novel as we know it, was contemporary with that extraordinary cloud of artistic decadence which spread over Eastern Europe during the 18th century, and which is known in Germany as the "Zopf" ("pigtail") or stilted period, with which may be compared the French "style perruque." Of its effect in England it is sufficient to remind the reader that the first Oxford undergraduate who attempted to play the piano in public was hissed off the platform—not for playing badly but for playing at all! The miasma was only dispelled by the rise of the Romantic School.

The novelist, not less than the playwright, does but "hold up a mirror to nature." Hence not till the novelist had gone far on his way, not, indeed, till the male wielder of the pen was being rapidly overtaken in the field of fiction by writers of the gentler sex, did—at least in Great Britain—a romance appear with a musician for its hero. The honour of being pioneer rests with Elizabeth Shepherd for her "Charles Auchester": the book, which appeared in 1855, is said by some to represent the early life of Mendelssohn, by others, of Sterndale Bennett. The two composers had much in common and musical readers are not

agreed. For some twenty years the work stood alone, the only one of its kind. Not till 1875, or thereabouts, did its first companion appear in "Alcestis," an exceedingly able study of musical life in Dresden in the time of Hasse (1699-1783). Much more rapidly did others follow, inspired doubtless by the phenomenal success which attended Miss Jessie Fothergill's "The First Violin," which appeared in 1878. Chief of the many which have since appeared may be mentioned "The Dominant Seventh" by Kate Clark; "The Minor Chord" the first whose author, J. Mitchell Chappell, I take to be one of the "Sons of Jubal" rather than a "Daughter of Music" to quote Solomon's phrase. The scene of the two last named lies to a great extent in America. Edna Lyall's "Doreen: the story of a Singer," has less musical interest than the title would suggest: Rita's "Countess Daphne" has more—the authoress is spokeswoman for the violins. Mr. Marion Crawford's "A Roman Singer"; Hall Caine's "The Prodigal Son"; Allen Raines' immensely popular "A Welsh Singer"; Lucas Cleve's "From Crown to Cross"; and E. F. Benson's "Sheaves" also claim inclusion.

The study of mental phenomena being so marked a feature of our age, and its ethereal characters so marked a feature of music, it follows as a matter of course that the art would not escape the psychological novelist with a purpose. Hence we find Tolstoy in "The Kreutzer Sonata" attributing a peculiarly diabolical wife-murder to the "terrible effect" produced on the husband by the *Presto* of the sonata which gives the book its title. It may reassure timid readers unfavourably disposed to the summary despatching of spouses to know that the sonata in question is the most popular of its kind ever written and has never been known to lead to a breach of the Sixth Commandment! Moreover the great Russian elsewhere in the same book speaks of music as "the noblest of all arts." So inviting, indeed is the "herald of life to come" as Swinburne calls music, to those who would lift the veil, that two writers depicting life beyond the veil have recently and simultaneously chosen a musician as their subject quite independently of each other. Namely, Mr. H. A. Vachell in "The Other Side," and Mr. Arnold Bennett in "The Glimpse." Considerably prior to these writers Mr. Du Maurier, in "Trilby" made use of music to illustrate the supposed possibilities of hypnotism. If, however, the book is as unreliable scientifically as it is musically, its main effect on the mental expert will be a ceaseless reminder that its author was one of the most brilliant members on the staff of "Punch!"

In view of so considerable an output of musical novels, it is strange that so little should have been made of the art in the short story. In Germany, it is but fair to say, the neglect is not so marked as in this country. Witness the works of Elsa Polko, who to her musical biographies, poems, and novels, has added short stories which, despite hyper-sentimentality, have had an immense vogue.

In regard to passing allusions, it is at first sight strange that the novelist—supposedly an expert in the actualities of life—should be much more prone to error than the poet. A little thought, however, will show that it is this very dealing with the actualities, with its necessity for prosaic detail and material circumstances, which ensnares the writer of romance. The poet deals only with the *effects* of music: the novelist with its implements: and it is these exigencies of narrative which betray him into details requiring more technical knowledge than he possesses. Hence much sport to the readers of musical papers, for they are frequently regaled with the woful bungling of fiction writers whose musical ambition has outrun their discretion. Papers have also been read before the learned societies of music, and magazine articles written, on the same entertaining theme. Perhaps the commonest mistake is in ignoring the very limited capacity of stringed instruments, even under the bow of an expert, for harmony—the playing of chords, and the impossibility of sustaining them. Paganini startled his expert hearers by continuing a chord to some extent, but only by one of his several tricks—loosening the strings of his bow. Yet in “A Roman Singer” we have “great broad chords, splendid in *depth* and royal harmony, grand, enormous, and massive as the united choirs of heaven,” all on one violin! And as if this thaumaturgic performance was not enough, we are told later on of the chord of A minor being “sustained” while the player, a Jew, “imitated the sound of a laughing voice.” No musician would have been able to laugh: he would have been too thunder-struck! It is a pity that novelists do not try to themselves perform at least the simpler feats they attribute to their characters. Had Ouida and Mr. Du Maurier attempted to sing two notes at a time the former would not have represented a heroine as singing “glorious harmonie” all by herself, or the latter Trilby as performing a similar feat. But were all the musical absurdities extracted from “Trilby,” nothing of the art in that engaging romance would remain. And Mr. Sutherland Edwards has been cruel enough to say much the same of Mr. Haweis’ “Music and Morals”—though, forsooth, that book is



not a novel. Putting chronology aside, we read in "The Last of the Barons" that "many voices of men and women joined in deeper bass, with the shrill tenor of the choral urchins." Was Lord Lytton anxious to find how many mistakes he could compress into eighteen words? Women do not sing bass or "urchins" tenor; the tenor is not a shrill voice, and the term "choral" is not usually applied to a number of voices singing the same part—"tenor" in this case: "unison" is the term used.

Even Charles Reade, who really did know something about music—at any rate about old violins—was on dangerous ground when he ventured on details of musical technique. In "Peg Woffington," for example, he makes the famous actress whistle a quick movement upon a huge paste ring, and then tells how Mr. Cibber was confounded by "this sparkling *adagio*." A quick movement which is at the same time an *adagio* is enough to confound anybody. Victor Hugo, in "Les Misérables," has three violins and a flute playing some of Haydn's quartets at a wedding. It is exasperating of that very Teutonic and Celtic Frenchman not to have told us where a copy of these quartets by the Father of Instrumentation for four instruments of *practically identical pitch* can be obtained! Mr. George Meredith and Marie Corelli are generally so rhapsodic—not to say burlesque—in their musical references as to defy criticism of detail. Nevertheless the author of Beauchamp's Career, in a passage otherwise unusually discriminating, includes the dulcimer and drum among organ stops—two of the few instruments never imitated in the King of Instruments.

But enough of this: especially as experts themselves are by no means infallible. That never-failing butt of their wit, the bag-pipes, has proved itself also the cause of their confusion. Its wind being supplied direct from the player's own lungs, it would at first sight appear impossible that anyone could both play it and sing at the same time. Hence much merriment of musicians at the expense of a novelist who had depicted a Highlander as singing snatches of national song the whiles he played the national instrument. But it so happens that the wind-reservoir of the Scottish pipes, though not the Irish, will allow of the chanter being played for an appreciable time between the inflations. Consequently, if not needing to rest his lungs, the player, after filling the bag, can sing a few bars before he need blow again. And no less expert an ear-witness than Sir Frederick Bridge has heard it done. "He laughs best who laughs last" and the surviving smile in this case must undoubtedly be awarded to the novelist.

Occasionally the makers of books, especially novelists, do more than merely refer to music in their works: they quote it in music-type. "Rita's" book "Countess Daphne" (1880) was, I believe, the first in which this was done systematically as a heading to the chapters, though in "The First Violin," published two years earlier, a chapter is headed by a quotation from one of Raff's symphonies. Charles Reade, in "Hard Cash," was probably the first to quote a folk-song—*Eileen Allannah*; and his example has been followed by Beatrice Harraden, whose "Kathleen Trensham" contains several examples of Swedish national songs. The axiom "verify your references" is not less necessary in regard to musical than literary quotations: and errors are by no means unknown even in the apparently simple work of transcription. A friend tells me of an author who, not content with perpetrating one of the most excruciating harmonic progressions known—"consecutive fifths"—must needs do it on the cover of his book and in notes of gold! Perhaps, however, the composition was original.

But it must be admitted that the most usual error of the romance writer is an exaggeration of the musical prowess of his heroes and heroines. And he would be a surly son of Jubal who thought only of these too generous tributes and forgot many encomiums of the art not less discriminating than eloquent. Witness J. H. Shorthouse:

Every lovely fancy, every moment of delight, every thought and thrill of pleasure which music calls forth, or which already existing, is beautified and hallowed by music, does not die.

Or Hall Caine, in "The Prodigal Son":—

The musician is the international artist. Other artists—the Poets, for example—require translators, but the musician needs no go-between. He uses the one universal language, and when he speaks the whole world may hear. What a gift!

## THE PHILOSOPHY OF COPYRIGHT

By ERNEST BRUNCKEN

IT is very likely that in modern times, if not in earlier days, there are no artists or authors of any kind, and especially no musical authors, who do not consider their "copyright" as something to which as a matter of course they are entitled in morals; and if the law does not give it to them in full measure, they are inclined to say that the law falls behind what it should be in order to achieve its own ideal of justice. Few people of trained intelligence will be disposed to quarrel with them on this point; but all might not agree on the philosophical reason for such a claim. Nothing is more commonly heard among authors than expressions such as this: If a man makes a coat it belongs to him; if he makes a song, why should that not be his also? Yet, it is very curious to find that the self-evident equity of copyright protection, implied in such a question, is by no means so self-evident to the generality of mankind who are not authors and do not derive their opinions directly from authors or artists. The man who steals my coat, or the defaulting bank official who filches my savings, does not deny that I am entitled to my property. Yet the unsophisticated mass of people need considerable explanation before they understand that it is wrong to perform a musical composition in public, or even to copy the notes embodying it, without first getting the composer's permission. Who is wrong, the author who insists on his right, or the man on the street who fails to see that such right exists?

One reason why people's ideas are confused regarding this subject may be the habit lawyers have of speaking of copyright as "property." It is not hard to understand that in reality the privilege of exercising certain control over the products of one's artistic talent is not the same thing as the privilege of exercising dominion over some tangible thing. A work of art is not a tangible thing—it is a creation of the mind, to which a human being can have relations only through his mind, never through his body in the way in which he may handle his coat or his money. In the case of literary and musical works, the truth of this is seen easily enough even by untrained intellects. Hardly anybody will fail to understand that the paper and ink by means of which the

work of the author is recorded is not that work itself. In the case of painting or sculpture, this distinction is a little less apparent. Very commonly, men who have bought a picture are greatly astonished when they are told that they have no right to have it reproduced without the consent of the artist. To readers of this magazine, it will not be necessary to explain how the canvas and paint a multimillionaire may hang in his gallery is no more that work of Rembrandt for which he pays a hundred thousand dollars than the manuscript of the Ninth Symphony is the work for which Beethoven has become immortal. Wherefore the law very properly provides that the purchase of certain canvas and paint, or certain pieces of paper and ink, does not imply a purchase of the copyright.

The law is not to be blamed for calling by the same name of "property" such diverse conceptions as the right to dispose of something one may handle or carry about, and the right to forbid or allow the multiplication of the corporeal object used for recording the ideas of an author. Property is a general term expressing a considerable number of things besides those mentioned. The thing these have in common, and which makes them property, is that they involve a legal power of dominion or control on the part of a person called the proprietor over something outside of himself. The difficulty arises merely from the inability of many people to realize that such relations can exist between a man and something which is not of a tangible, corporeal kind.

However, to say that it is possible for property to exist in a certain subject matter does not prove that such property should exist. It is the purpose of this article to inquire why, if at all, artists, writers, and musical composers should be accorded a privilege which to not a few otherwise intelligent and honest members of society seems incomprehensible.

The reason that will probably occur most readily to authors themselves is one based on the idea that what a man has himself made should belong to him. If this proposition is ever to be accepted at all as the foundation of property, it must certainly include artistic, literary and musical property, even if it were rejected regarding other kinds. For it seems to imply that the product of a man's labor is a part, so to speak, of his own personality. Undoubtedly there is much truth in that theory. For whatever a man makes embodies in itself and expresses to the outside world the peculiar, distinctive nature of that particular man. If a man makes a shoe, it is quite certain that no other man could have made a shoe of exactly that kind. However

slight the differences may be which distinguish his shoe from one his neighbour makes according to the same pattern, they do exist and are an expression of precisely those slight differences of individual physique, temperament and character which make him a different man from that neighbour. To deprive him of the shoe against his will would indeed amount to an invasion of his personality. It would be hardly less than taking away a part of his individual right of self-determination. It might differ in degree, but not in kind from making him love or hate, feel interested or be bored against his will—if such a thing could be accomplished. Now, if that is true of a mere artisan, whose skill is mostly in his hands, it is many times more applicable to labor involving the highest degrees of imagination, such as works of literature, art and music. To deprive a man of the power to dispose as he wills of such products of his mind, is an invasion of his personality of the most serious nature. For what can be more intimately connected with the very essence of a man's being than the spiritual products of his own mind?

If therefore we assume that we have the true basis for property rights in the theory that a man is, by the very nature of justice, entitled to have dominion over the product of either his hand or his brain, we must certainly admit that artists should have their copyright. We shall even be obliged to go much farther in that direction than any law actually in force has ever gone. For we shall have difficulty in finding a just reason why any limitations whatsoever should be placed on the right of any author to do with his own precisely as he pleases, to allow one person to read his book or play his composition and to prohibit another from doing so—or to allow one man to copy it and keep another from doing so for all time to come. Such complete dominion is accorded to the shoemaker. Yet there is not a country in the world where the law does not put serious limitations on the rights of authors over their works. They may keep them locked up in their desks, or destroy the original manuscript; but the moment they have published them, their legal rights at once become very much restricted. Just what these restrictions are may differ at different times and in different countries, but practically without exception all rights of whatever nature will come to an end absolutely after a more or less protracted period, while the dominion of the shoemaker over his product remains in him or the purchaser for all time to come. Either the law actually in force falls far short of its own standard of justice, or the basis of property rights, in works of literature and art at least, must be something different

from the mere fact that the author has produced the subject matter of such rights.

However, there is a large body of judicial and sociological thought upholding the theory of property by production, if we may use this term. All those who believe that there exist, in the very nature of things, certain definite and immutable principles of right which the law actually in force should endeavour to approximate as closely as possible, would presumably incline in this direction. For evidently the proposition that it is unjust to deprive a man of dominion over something he has himself produced implies some such immutable principle of justice which must be entirely independent of any desires or opinions of men. The believers in immutable principles of justice that are quite independent of the desires or opinions of men are commonly known in law and sociology as the adherents of the Law of Nature school. As a corollary to their belief in absolute principles of justice, these men will, if they are at all logical, believe also in what is commonly called individualism; that is, they will hold that all laws and other social arrangements have for their aim and object the welfare of the individuals composing society. According to them, the State, and all other forms of association by which men try to gain common ends, are merely instruments to further the purposes of individuals. No social arrangement has any value apart from the individuals whom it serves. All such ideas accord very well with the notion that authors, like the producers of any other thing, are entitled to the fullest dominion over their work. If there is to be any restriction of this right at all there can be but one excuse, and that is where it can be proven that by insisting on the full measure of his right the author necessarily encroaches on some equally fundamental and immutable right of others.

There was a time when the Law of Nature school held undisputed sway over the minds of lawyers and all others who thought on such subjects. That, however, is long ago. During the last hundred years or so, quite a different set of ideas has gradually made headway. While there are still a great many people who, whether they are fully conscious of the fact or not, entertain notions in substantial accord with the Law of Nature doctrine, a majority of social thinkers have abandoned these doctrines brought down from the eighteenth century. The author who bases his claim of unlimited copyright on the fact that he produced the work is likely to find no such undivided theoretical assent as he might have done seventy-five years ago.



Sociological thinkers at the present time incline to denying that such things exist as immutable, fundamental principles of right. They may not be agreed on what is the true basis of property, but they are nearly all certain that whatever basis there may be, instead of being the same at all places and in all ages, changes in accordance with the circumstances of any given human society. Although justice may never die, yet what is just in any particular instance depends on what the men forming society may think about it, and the men of to-day may think very differently from what their predecessors thought. Again, as a corollary of this notion of a changing content of the formal concept "justice," many modern thinkers no longer accept the doctrine that all social arrangements are merely for the benefit of the individuals composing society. It cannot exactly be said that we have reversed the position and maintain that individuals exist for the benefit of society. The truth is rather that we are disinclined to put the individual and society into the sharply contrasted positions in which it was customary to represent them formerly. People had a more or less definite notion that men at one time lived without forming a society. That was the doctrine of the state of nature which was followed by the famous social contract, supposed to have been concluded of deliberate purpose in order to obtain certain benefits a social life seemed to promise. At the present time it is difficult even to imagine a condition where human beings did not form some sort of society, however rudimentary. In fact, a being looking like a man but belonging to no human society could not, in the opinion of many, properly be called a man at all. Whatever we may think about that, most thinkers would agree, nowadays, that the welfare of the individual and the good of society cannot be separated, and that in consequence no right, whether of property or anything else, can be superior to the claims of society.

Following the trend of these ideas we shall come to the conclusion that the justice of a composer's claim to copyright must be measured by what may appear to be the highest interest of society. If it should turn out that society would be better off if all copyright laws were abrogated the author could appeal to no principle of justice higher than the social will; for according to the views we are now considering society itself determines what is just. Accordingly, we shall have to consider the needs of society, and society alone, when we wish to determine whether any particular restriction on an author's rights is either just or expedient.

However, the poor author need not be afraid that his own interests will be entirely overlooked. Fortunately for him it happens that the general welfare of the world and that of the individual are opposed to each other in exceptional cases only. Still more often, the interests of individuals are of such a nature that under most conditions society feels indifferent to them, so that they are left to be regulated in the same manner as if there were no society to assert its own claims. The outcome of these circumstances is that in all discussions of the rights of authors one should consider the subject from three distinct points of view: The interests of the authors; the interests of those who may desire to enjoy the works produced by the authors, or if we may apply a purely economic terminology to such matters without hurting the feelings of that *irritabile genus*, the artistic soul, the interests of the consumers; and finally the interests of society in general. According to the view of the modern school of "sociological" thinkers, the last-named must under all circumstances be paramount if they happen to be in conflict with those of either or both the other classes.

The interest which the author—whether he is a literary writer, a musical composer, or a worker in what is termed art in a narrow sense—has in his work after it is produced is of a double nature. One we may call the artistic, the other his economic interest. We may assume that to the true artist the former is far more important than the economic relation; and although there be those to whom art is merely a convenient means of acquiring economic advantages, yet we may be justified in the optimistic belief that works of literature, art and music would still be produced if they were deprived of every form of economic value. In fact, the neglect with which many artists treat the economic side of their work has been an important factor in shaping the laws that regulate copyright and giving an advantage of doubtful equity to the mere publisher or interpreter, over and above what of right ought to go to him.

The rights to which an author is justly entitled from an artistic point of view may be summed up by saying that his work ought not to be altered without his consent. It would be hard to imagine a greater grievance than that of a poet who should find his poem published with all sorts of negligent, ignorant or malicious changes, destroying or weakening the effect he intended to produce. The composer, in a similar way, would properly object to having his manuscript reproduced with changes unauthorized by himself; but beyond that he is in a worse position

than his literary brother. For music, in order to be enjoyed or "consumed," requires the performer who acts as intermediary between the composer and the public. It would hardly be practicable to give the author the privilege of deciding who shall and who shall not sing or play his composition after he has once published it. Not only would the task of making such selection be beyond the power of any man, but his economic interests are a powerful incentive for the composer to renounce such privileges. Nevertheless, even we who are not artists can imagine the torture a composer must feel when he hears incompetent performers destroy all the best effects of his work. From the purely artistic point of view, there is no reason apparent why such a right of selecting the performers should not be retained by the composer if he is willing to disregard his possible economic losses. As a matter of fact efforts are sometimes made to assert such a privilege, as in the case of Wagner's Bayreuth works. If the right is to be denied it must be on the ground of paramount claims on the part of the "consumer" of music or of society at large.

The economic interests of the author in his work are a great deal more complicated than is the artistic one, so far as the latter can have any influence over the laws regarding his copyright. They are more complicated even than is imagined by those who are ignorant of the many changes the law of property has undergone during the numerous stages through which economic society has passed in historical times. A majority of men seem to be unable to realize that the customs and ideas with which they are familiar are not necessarily the only ones by which rational beings may regulate their affairs. Consequently they are apt to mistake temporary means of accomplishing economic or social ends for the only possible ones. Something like this happens whenever authors imagine that the right to dispose of their works for money, or to exact money for the privilege of performing them, is identical with those just rights regarding their works which the law ought to preserve for them. This notion is based on ignorance of the historical fact that not so very long ago no literary or musical author was able to obtain pay for his work from any person whatsoever. The present custom of paying for manuscripts, or rather of compensating the author by money for the trouble he goes to in producing his work for the delectation of others, has gradually sprung up as one of the minor phases of a great social and economic development which historians call the rise of capitalism. It is only within the last two hundred

years or so that this movement has assumed those extensive proportions which at the present moment make it the dominant feature of the economic and social world.

The musical composer, like every other kind of author, is not primarily interested in getting money for his work. What he is really interested in is to be so circumstanced economically that he can live in about the same style of comfort as those with whom he principally associates. Beyond that, he properly desires to hold a social position sufficiently high that he may not be cramped, by the humbleness of his place in life, in the proper development of his talents; and finally, he may fairly ask that he shall not be burdened with duties of a kind that are inimical to the healthy life of his artistic powers. In days not so very long ago these interests were ordinarily satisfied by the composer or literary author becoming attached to the establishment of some patron of wealth and high social station. The patron supplied him with the means of living in a manner such as the public opinion of the time deemed appropriate, and in doing so performed one of the duties which the same public opinion imposed on persons of rank. Occasionally, an author might obtain a livelihood by entering the service of the Church or some city. Or he might himself have sufficient means to support him, or follow some other trade or profession and be an author or composer in his leisure hours only, just as might be the case at the present day. At any rate, he was not dependent for the means of support on the possibility of selling the products of his artistic talent in competition with hundreds of others in the same predicament. In no sense were his means of livelihood directly proportioned to the quantity of work he did and the success he had in disposing of his wares to the public. His living was assured as long as he retained the favor of his patron, or could find another if he quarreled with him, even if the work he did was very small in quantity or appealed to a limited circle. The dependence on a patron was not itself felt as something irksome in those days, for under the reign of feudalism and other aristocratic institutions the dependence of one man upon another was the universal rule. Public opinion approved of it, and in the lower as well as the higher circles of such a society many people no doubt imagined that this arrangement was the only desirable one, just as to-day many believe that our present arrangements must always have appeared preferable to every other kind.

It is easy to see that the question of copyright was not of very much importance to musical or literary authors so situated.

They were provided for, whether they could sell copies of their works or not. Presumably there was an occasional author in whom the quality of acquisitiveness was exceptionally developed and who would therefore be anxious to make all the money he could; but generally, the absence of a market for musical compositions was not felt to be a particular grievance. Consequently there was no occasion for the rise of a system of copyright laws in the modern sense.

When copyright laws finally did arise, it was not on account of the authors but on account of the printers. Through the inventions of printing, engraving and similar reproductive arts it became possible to make large numbers of copies of every manuscript, and it was the most natural thing in the world for the skilled artisans who did this sort of work, to sell the copies in the open market instead of waiting for an order before they started on the work. The copies were cheap, and consequently the market was large. At first it never entered anybody's mind to think that the author or composer had any interest in the multiplication and sale of such copies, but when this new kind of trade had assumed considerable proportions, the printers, or publishers, themselves discovered that it would be to their advantage if they could persuade an author to write a composition or a book for their own special benefit. The simplest means of persuasion was to pay him money and thus for the first time authors discovered that what they produced had a direct pecuniary value, apart from the favor a work might gain in the eyes of some bountiful patron. A long time passed, however, before authors generally could rely on the sale of their manuscripts to publishers for making a respectable living. Two hundred years ago, to be a publisher's hack living on the proceeds of one's pen came pretty near to being the lowest depth of misery a man might sink to. In the case of the musical composer, the possibility of building an appreciable part of one's economic existence on the sale of manuscripts to publishers was even later in coming. However, the musician was more fortunate than his literary brother because he was usually a performer or conductor, as well as a composer, and as such his services had a market value long before his manuscripts had.

When a publisher had paid good money to an author, he was naturally anxious that some competitor should not publish the same work without paying for the privilege. Thus it was that the need for copyright laws first arose. The business of the publisher was carried on in the capitalistic manner, which means

that some person having sufficient money to buy the necessary tools and materials, hires men to do the work for wages while the finished product becomes his own, to be sold to the consumer. In the centuries preceding the invention of printing, it was rather the exception for any business to be carried on in that manner; but just about the time when printing became common, the capitalistic way of doing business began to grow more frequent, and this process has continued until to-day it is a rare thing to find business done in any other way. As copyright laws began just when the growth of capitalistic business forms had become noticeable, and as they took their origin in the exigencies of a capitalistic enterprise, we are justified in saying that the system of copyright is one of the features of a state of society in which capitalistic forms of production are predominant. It did not exist before the rise of capitalism, and it is altogether probable that it will decay and possibly disappear entirely when capitalism shall itself have been superseded by some other dominant form of economic life.

At first, the attempt of the publishers to protect themselves against piratical competitors took the form of obtaining special privileges from the government. This was rendered more easy by the desire of the governments themselves to keep an eye on what was being published. The censorship and copyright privileges went hand in hand: If the censor authorized the publishing of a book, the government also saw to it that it was not reprinted by unauthorized persons. In England, that famous institution which in most people evokes nothing but images of tyranny and oppression, the Court of Star Chamber, had a great deal to do with evolving those equitable principles on which later copyright legislation was built. When the notion of a free press, unhampered by the supervision of a censor, began to be advocated, the question of copyright had to be carefully considered. Milton, in his plea for freedom of the press, the celebrated *Areopagitica*, takes good care to guard against the insinuation that he would deprive printers of "their copies." When, after the revolution of 1689, the censorship was actually abolished, copyright protection was for a while in precarious condition, until the Parliament, in the reign of Anne, passed the statute of 1708, which has become the basis of subsequent copyright legislation in all the English-speaking countries.

Musical copyright was even slower in developing than the protection of literary publications. One reason of this was that the printing of music notes was a more difficult and expensive



process than the printing of text. Moreover, the market for the more elaborate compositions was much more restricted than even for the largest and most expensive books. The custom of copying musical compositions merely by hand persisted long after the market for the manuscript reproductions of literary works had entirely disappeared, and the practice is not unknown even at the present day. Consequently there was not, for a long time, the need for laws to prevent unauthorized printing of the manuscripts. On the other hand, the custom of exacting royalties for a performance sprang up quite naturally when authors had once conceived the idea that there was a possibility of getting money for their compositions. As long as the composer had to furnish the manuscript in the absence of a published copy, it was natural enough that he should receive a fee; and when finally the question of musical copyright was regulated by express law, this custom was extended to public performances even from published copies.

When copyright legislation, in the course of its development, reached what we may fairly call its modern phase, there still remained the business interest of the publisher as a powerful factor to be considered. In fact it proved to be a more powerful factor than the interest of the author himself in not a few instances. At first authors seem to have acquiesced quite generally in the notion that the interests of themselves and of the publisher were identical. Generally speaking, the publishers were in a better position to make their influence felt with legislatures and governments, and consequently they assumed to speak for the authors. When copyright legislation began to attract the attention of the general public, they discovered that it was easier to arouse sympathy for authors' rights than for the special interests of a handful of more or less wealthy business men who acted as intermediaries between the composers, writers, or artists and the public. The result has been that arguments in copyright discussions nearly always assume that it is the authors' rights that are to be protected, while the result of legislation seems, on the whole, to take the side of the publisher whenever his interests and those of the authors are not identical. The more "popular" a government is, that is the more it is a mere instrument in the hands of whatever clique or combination happens to be in the ascendancy for the time being, the more pronounced is the preponderance of the publishers' interests over those of the authors. Publishers are capitalistic business men, and consequently they profit from whatever tends to benefit the capitalist class generally. In the United States, more than in any other country, is government dominated

by the capitalists, and it is not surprising therefore that here the publishers have shaped and are still able to shape copyright legislation principally to suit themselves. At the opposite pole stand the German Empire, France, and some smaller countries, where the authors obtain the greatest consideration. In Germany this may be ascribed to the fact that there the capitalistic class has never been able to obtain complete sway against other economic interests and the influence of the monarchy; in France, which is almost as completely dominated by the capitalists as America, it happens that the copyright law in force, or at least its essential principles, dates back to 1793, before modern capitalism had acquired its complete ascendancy. The Berne copyright union also throws its weight in favor of the authors where their interests conflict with those of the publishers.

Such a conflict arises, aside from questions of detail, especially with regard to the two different principles which serve as the foundation of copyright protection in one country or the other. It is possible to give such protection to an author simply because he is the author, and this may be done whether one believes in those principles of the Law of Nature, which were referred to in the beginning of this article, or whether one merely thinks that such a policy is on the whole more expedient from the standpoint of society at large. This principle is at the bottom of the law in Germany, France, and now to some extent also in Great Britain, since the revision of its copyright laws a few years ago. The opposite principle declares, in effect, that the special privileges of copyright must be acquired by compliance with whatever conditions government chooses to attach to the granting of the right. Under the opposite principle, one must always presume that a musical, literary or artistic copyright exists, unless it clearly appears that it has either been lost through lapse of time, or because the author failed to observe the conditions attached by the law. Under the last-named theory, however, the presumption is reversed: No work is protected by copyright, unless the author can prove clearly that he has taken certain formal steps to acquire such a privilege. Such steps are of various kinds, the more usual ones being publication with a copyright notice, registration of the claim with some designated official, deposit of copies of the work in designated places. The latter rule prevails in the United States, although some provisions of the present copyright statute seem to be designed to establish the theory that the copyright is as a matter of fact based on authorship. Unfortunately, this theory is not followed out in the statute as long as compulsory

notice of claim and registration remains. Yet it must be admitted that the present statute, according to which copyright protection begins the moment a work is published with a notice of copyright claim, is a great step in advance of all former statutes, under which copyright began with the registration.

The first of these alternative principles, according to which copyright attaches itself to a published work as a matter of course, although it may be lost by non-observance of legal conditions, is on the whole the more advantageous to the author, while the publishers find the opposite policy in many cases very convenient. It would carry us too far afield if we showed at length how this happens, but almost any author will soon learn from practical experience that the statement is true.

Now it will be seen after a little reflection that the interests of the publisher should have no consideration except in so far as by protecting him the author is protected. If we accept the Law of Nature doctrine, the right of the publisher to print the work at all must needs be derived from the author; that being so, it would be as absurd to give him any privileges conflicting with the property right of the author as it would be to say that a man to whom I have sold an acre may therefore take from me any further quantity of land he pleases. If, however, we base the copyright law on the ground that the welfare of society makes it expedient that authors should be given a certain amount of control over their published works, it would be necessary to prove that the publisher's interest is of equal social importance with the author's, and of superior importance in all cases where he is preferred over the author.

If authors were still able to live in fair comfort without selling the control of their works, as was the case before the capitalistic system became dominant in the world, it would be difficult to prove that copyright laws ought to be enacted. Any plea in favor of copyright must start with the assumption that musical, literary and artistic works are economic goods, by the exchange of which their producer desires to obtain the means of living. It is inconceivable that any true artist should fail to recoil from this notion, although in all probability, in modern times, he will have to compromise with it as best he may. Works of literature, music and art are designed to give esthetic pleasure, and there is something forced, artificial, even revolting in any attempt at measuring the value of such productions by a money standard. However, in modern times there is, generally speaking no other way for authors to live, and we can hardly demand of

them to accept the principle embodied in the motto of the seamen's guild of Bremen, who in their Hall proclaim that it is necessary to navigate but not necessary to live. We may regret the necessity for the compromise, for its bad effect on art of every kind is apparent enough. Nine-tenths of the superfluous work, nine-tenths of the stuff, in all the arts, that appeals to the low taste of the crowd, or to the lower taste of philistines with heavy bank accounts, would never be produced if artists were not forced to coin their talents into money. However, the authors are not primarily to blame for this. The guilt is that of a society which fails to provide for their support in some more rational manner.

We must further assume that the welfare of society demands the continued production of new works of literature, art and music. Fortunately, it is not probable that this will be disputed, in seriousness, by anybody. All copyright laws, therefore, should be designed to enable artists to maintain themselves and their families out of the proceeds of their works, if those works are of such a kind that a sufficient market can be found for them. In order to find a market authors need certain intermediaries, of whom the most important are the publishers. Publishers, being like authors compelled to support themselves out of the proceeds of their products, will not publish new works unless they are protected against piratical reprints. To this extent, therefore, the printers or publishers must be protected no less than the authors, but that is for no reason except that the authors themselves are thereby protected. Society has no particular interest in protecting the publishers on their own account. Generally speaking, it would be a matter of indifference if the publishers all became shoemakers instead, were it not for the necessity of bringing the works of the authors into the market. It follows that any provision of the copyright law conferring privileges on publishers to the detriment of authors cannot be for the interest of society, and consequently should not properly be a part of the law.

Society undoubtedly is interested in having authors, but it is no less interested in making it easy for readers, listeners and beholders to enjoy works of literature, music and art. If society had to care for the authors only, the privileges given to them might well be almost as extensive as if the law proceeded on the theory that the work belonged to the author in the same sense that potatoes properly belong to the farmer who has grown them. All laws actually in force in any country are the result of compromises between the need of protection to authors and the

desire to make it easy for the public to enjoy literary, musical and artistic works—disregarding for the present those cases where publishers have managed to acquire unfair and improper privileges.

If the economic protection of authors were the only consideration involved, it would be difficult to understand why copyrights should expire after the lapse of a definitely prescribed time. Most other property rights are not subject to such limitations but continue forever as long as their subject matter still exists. At first this looks like a rather severe handicap for the author, but a little reflection will show that it is justified not only from the point of view of society but even from that of the author himself. Experience shows that copyrighted works are much more expensive for the public to acquire than those which either have never enjoyed copyright protection or for which the copyright has expired. As soon as the period of protection has passed, if the work is still alive, inexpensive reproductions come into the market, to the great joy of the purchaser or "consumer." The mass of ephemeral works, of course, are not reproduced, but the same thing would be true if the copyright lasted forever; while society has an obvious interest in having those works find the widest possible market which have proven their excellence by surviving the protracted period of copyright protection. If the monopoly of the author lasted forever, which would necessarily imply that the monopoly would be exercised by his successors, or worse still, by an assignee and his successors, it would be quite conceivable that the world might be deprived of the enjoyment of master-pieces by some descendant of the author who might refuse to let new editions be published. This danger would be less great in the case of musical compositions than of books. For in the latter case religious or political prejudices would sometimes be the motive for such churlishness. Yet one could not be sure even in the case of musical works, for the indifference, or the mere whim of the copyright owner might have just as deplorable an effect as the more serious objections of the fanatic. Manifestly the interests of society would be greatly injured, either by keeping a work expensive, or by suppressing it altogether. Similarly, the injury to the artist would be just as great. To be sure, where he himself or his immediate descendants still get the benefit of the copyright, he may sometimes be inclined to value the material income higher than the added fame and added usefulness coming from the wider distribution an inexpensive edition is likely to attain; but it is quite inconceivable that an artist should feel so tender of the interests of

his great-great-grandchildren, not to mention the descendants of the publisher to whom he had sold his copyright, as to prefer their pecuniary profits to the wider distribution of his work. The fact of the matter is that the only people to be benefited by a permanent copyright, or even by a very protracted period of protection, are those belonging to the publishing fraternity.

A more substantial grievance of authors is the principle, still prevailing in the United States but abandoned in many other countries, under which copyright does not belong to a publication as a matter of course but must be specially claimed in some public manner, usually by a notice attached to every published copy. This principle is burdensome to the author, and of no particular benefit to the public; the only party, again, that occasionally derives an advantage from it is the publisher. Works published without copyright notice are usually those to which the author, at the time of publication, attaches little importance. Very often it is the case with the first attempts of young authors and composers. True, it is small trouble to print such a notice; but commonly, as in the United States, the notice, to be effective must be followed by registration, the payment of a fee, and the deposit of copies. Experience shows that in many instances the trouble and expense of doing this is more than the author cares to undertake. A certain proportion of the works so neglected afterwards become valuable, from a pecuniary point of view, because the author has become known. Then some enterprising publisher reproduces the earlier work without asking the author's leave, as under laws based on the special claim idea he has a right to do. If he pays some pittance to the author, it is a mere gratuity, which to a sensitive man would almost be an insult; in most cases, probably, the publisher does not see fit to show even such slight recognition of the author's existence.

The injury done to authors by the necessity of taking special steps to protect their rights does not end with possible pecuniary losses. The author of a non-copyrighted work is also helpless against reproduction of his work in so inferior a manner that his reputation must suffer. Musicians may be said to stand about half-way between painters, sculptors and other artists who are constantly suffering from such injuries and literary authors who are subjected to them comparatively seldom. It is even possible and happens comparatively often that a conscienceless publisher reproduces an unprotected work without so much as mentioning the author's name. Yet the latter is legally helpless and will have to be thankful if the publisher does not add the crowning



insult of ascribing the work to some stranger. In the latter case, the general principles of equity might perhaps afford a remedy, although it would be expensive and difficult. However, as far as known, no such suit has ever been prosecuted.

It is difficult to see what good reason there is for adhering to the principle that a copyright must be specially claimed in a formal way, instead of following as a matter of course the publication of the work. Apparently there is no reason, except the *vis inertiae*, the fact that it has been so for more than a hundred years. It is true that much stress is laid, by the older school of American lawyers, on the point that a copyright is a special, unusual privilege, curtailing the rights of all other persons to print what they like, wherefore the exercise of such privilege should be made as difficult as possible; but a younger class of lawyers is happily tending away from the traditional worship of mere scholastic concepts, such as "privilege" and the logical deductions flowing from them. Instead of that they seek to arrive at a fair adjustment of the interests of all concerned according to the actual facts and circumstances, and from this point of view, if it is once admitted that an author should have copyright protection at all, the exercise of his right should be made as easy and simple as possible. Sometimes the formalities are justified by drawing an analogy with those surrounding the obtaining of patents for mechanical inventions. That however is not good argument. A patent is only given after a difficult and exhaustive investigation by the government, because it is impossible, without expert information, to know whether a device is new or not. In the works subject to protection by copyright no such inquiry is necessary. Anybody can tell whether he is doing something original or pirating another man's work. In practice there can be no such thing as an unconscious infringement of a copyright, while it is entirely possible for two men independently to make the same mechanical invention. That one man should write the same musical composition or the same poem as another although he had never seen the first writer's work is conceivable, but about as probable as that letters in a printer's case should accidentally fall in such a way as to produce a line from Shakespeare. Therefore it is quite justifiable that the process of obtaining a patent should be difficult and expensive, but no reason can be drawn therefrom for surrounding an author's copyright with all sorts of obstacles.

The necessity of obtaining copyright by certain formal acts having no natural connection with authorship may be one of the

reasons why such queer, often grotesque notions are frequently met with regarding the nature and effect of copyright protection. It is not uncommon for persons otherwise quite intelligent to imagine that an author is helpless against an infringer who has taken care to introduce a few trifling changes. Among musicians this seems to take the form of counting the bars. Lawyers and copyright officials are constantly asked such questions as this: "How many bars do they have to change to make it impossible for me to get damages?" Readers of this magazine have hardly to be told that copyright is not such an absurd thing as this. If an infringer produces a substantial copy of the original he is liable, and what constitutes a substantial copy must be learned from all the surrounding circumstances but cannot be ascertained by a mechanical counting of the bars or notes.

Musical copyright has certain difficulties surrounding it of which other forms of authorship are free. Most of these grow out of the fact that the musical composer, in his attempts to reach his public, is even more dependent than others on various classes of intermediaries. If it seems to be difficult for many people to understand why it is wrong to reprint what others have written, it is still more so for many to see why they should not perform a musical composition, in public and for money, after they have bought and honestly paid for the score. Of late, the trouble has been increased by the invention of gramophones, player pianos and other devices for the production of music by wholly or partially mechanical contrivances. A little reflection ought to convince people that the performer or the manufacturer of disks and perforated rolls stands in no different position to the composer from the publisher who prints his score; and to allow them to use a work without paying royalty would be as unfair as to allow a printer to take the manuscript of the author without paying for it. These provisions do not constitute a preference of the musician over other classes of authors. If it were the general custom for people, instead of reading books themselves, to pay for having them read aloud in public, it would be but fair to make such public readers pay a royalty to the author. The poor composer might reasonably hope to find sympathetic comprehension among the performers of music. Yet seemingly there is a widespread feeling among orchestra leaders that they are the victims of unfair exactions if they are made to pay royalties to the writers of the pieces they play. According to recent newspaper information conductors who are engaged to interfere with conversation in restaurants and other public resorts have recently

threatened to boycott the American Society of Music Composers for demanding royalties, and the reason they urge seems to be that they are advertising the composers' music by playing it. On the same principle, a burglar would be advertising a shop he has robbed by causing the public to read the name of the victim in the newspapers.

To discuss the special forms which copyright protection may take under the laws of various countries, or to suggest amendments which it might be wise to adopt, cannot be a part of our present task. Such an attempt would require a treatise rather than a magazine article. We have tried, rather, to make clear to those who are not lawyers but are interested in the manner in which the law seeks to protect the products of their brains, the principles on which copyright laws may be based. Recapitulating the most important points it may be said: Copyright legislation is of comparatively modern growth. It is one of the results of new economic needs connected with the growth of capitalism and an attempt to bring the economic interests of the producers of works of literature, art and music under the rule of capitalistic economies. The ideal of capitalistic production is that every person shall produce some economic good not for his own consumption but for exchange with others who have produced the things he needs. Authors do not, in reality, produce economic goods. In a capitalistic society, they would therefore have nothing to exchange and would be likely to starve. Copyright is an attempt to treat their works as if they were economic goods, and enable authors to give something in exchange for the necessities and conveniences of life with which they are furnished by those who produce them. In a society, therefore, not built on the capitalistic plan, such as existed formerly and may exist again, there would be no need for copyright laws for the protection of the economic interests of authors. Such laws, however, might still be expedient for the protection of their artistic interests, by prohibiting inferior reproductions.

Copyright laws cannot be based on the mere proposition that the works of authors are by natural law their own. As a matter of fact, existing laws are all based on the theory that it is for the interest of society if authors are encouraged to devote themselves to their various arts. This being so, it is a sort of relapse into an outworn theory if copyright is made to depend on the performance of formal acts, like notice of claim and registration, rather than on the mere fact of authorship. The tendency of recent copyright legislation is everywhere away from such formalism.

In closing it may be said that as long as the capitalistic organization of society makes copyright laws necessary, the extent and effectiveness of the protection given to authors is a fair standard by which to measure the degree of civilization attained by any country. For such laws involve a recognition of the fact that there are factors of human activity more important to the world than the unlimited production of material wealth, not to speak of the mere accumulation of fortunes by more or less legitimate speculation.

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